Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XVIII, Issue No. 247 | WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 3, 2008 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

Villagomez seeks new deadline to file motions. **PAGE 3**

DPH, DEQ examine student safety as school nears. **PAGE 7**

CUC junks green energy plan

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has canceled efforts to obtain renewable energy sources for the CNMI.

Manny B. Sablan, procurement and supply manager at CUC, said yesterday that the utility withdrew the "request for proposals" for the renewable power project in light of flaws found by the Office of the Public Auditor in the procurement process.

See CUC on Page 4

Local shrimp firm warns against Chinese imports

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

A local shrimp farming company is warning consumers against potential health threats posed by contaminants that may be in seafood raised in China and marketed in the CNMI under lax government regulations.

In a statement issued Tuesday, staff with Saipan Aqua-

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STEFAN SEBASTIAN

Frozen shrimps imported from China that is being sold in some stores on island.

902 talks 'frustrating and fruitless'

Fitial

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has shot down some lawmakers' suggestion to open formal discussions with the federal government under Section 902 of the U.S.-CNMI Covenant, instead of going to court over

See 902 on Page 4

PP1 *back to two engines*

By KRISTI EATON
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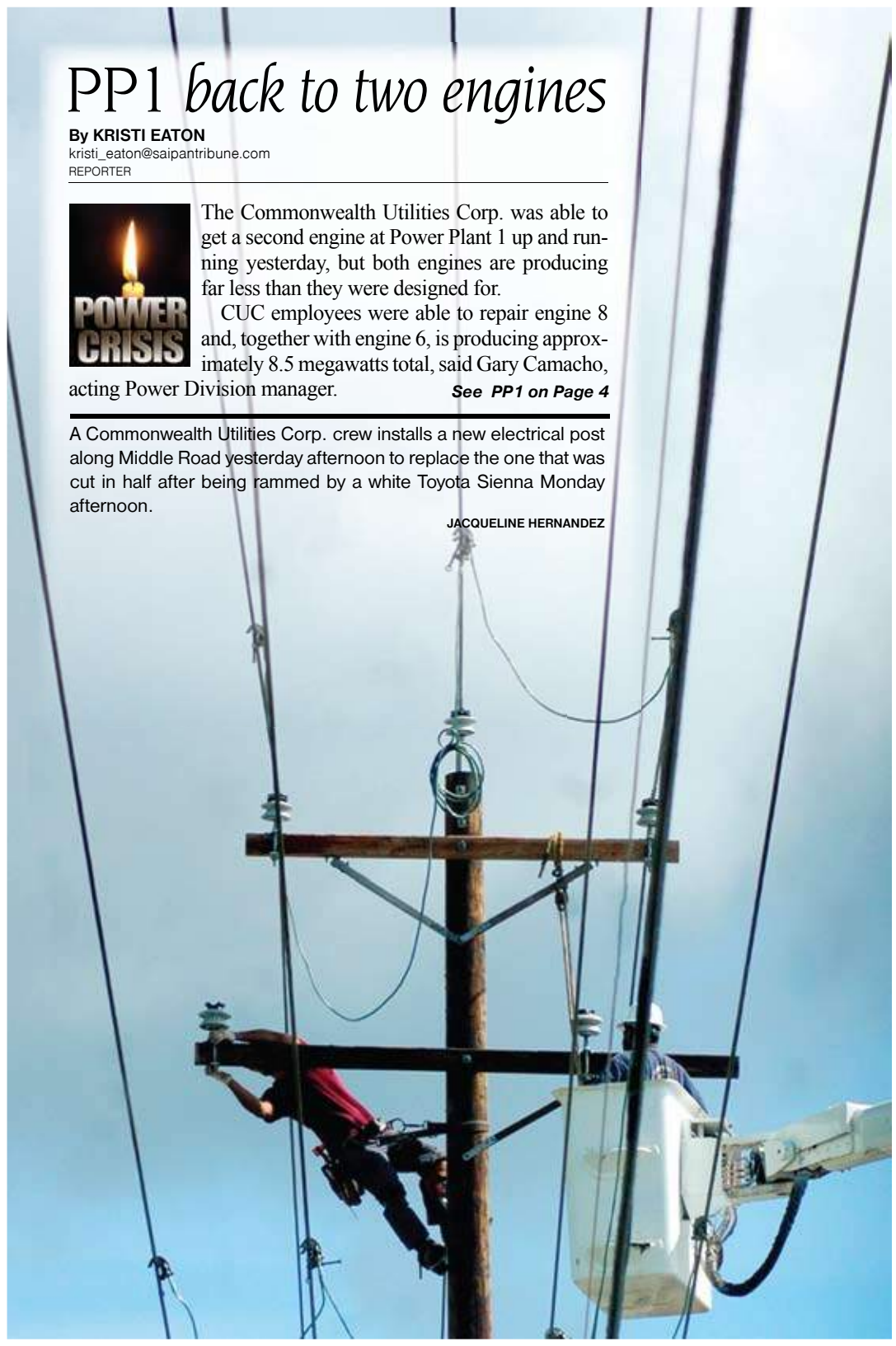
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. was able to get a second engine at Power Plant 1 up and running yesterday, but both engines are producing far less than they were designed for.

CUC employees were able to repair engine 8 and, together with engine 6, is producing approximately 8.5 megawatts total, said Gary Camacho, acting Power Division manager.

See PP1 on Page 4



A Commonwealth Utilities Corp. crew installs a new electrical post along Middle Road yesterday afternoon to replace the one that was cut in half after being rammed by a white Toyota Sienna Monday afternoon.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you believe CUC when it says there will be no more power outages after Sept. 16?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

13 DAYS until Sept. 16, when Aggreko generators are to start working

INSIDE

Weak Storm

A weaker-than-expected Gustav swirled into Louisiana's Cajun country Monday, delivering only a glancing blow to New Orleans.

NATION...Page 16

Emergency

The prime minister declared a state of emergency Tuesday in Bangkok to restore order.

ASIA...Page 17

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Local

1 unit at PP4 replaced with another unit

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The decommissioned power engine at the privately operated Power Plant 4 in Puerto Rico has already been replaced with another unit worth $350,000, according to operator Pacific Marine and Industrial Corp.

PMIC general manager Narciso Paradela told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that they want to correct the impression that they have 10 power engines but only nine are operating.

Paradela said their power engine no. 1 was replaced with unit no. 10, a newly reconditioned secondhand unit with a 2.5 megawatt capacity costing $350,000.

In other words, he said, they still have nine units because of the replacement and that all nine are operating.

"We have not taken out the engine no. 1 from its foundation because of the cost to dispose of it," the company official said in an e-mail.

He pointed out that if there is an economical or practical way for them to rehabilitate unit no. 1, they would have done so long time ago.

Power Plant 4 has reportedly been saving Saipan's electric power distribution in the middle of malfunctions and current repairs on power engines at the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s main power plants in Lower Base.

CUC executive director Antonio Muña had earlier stated that the PMIC-operated Power Plant 4 is a key component in the power distribution system, delivering over 30 percent of the island's power needs.

Since Friday, however, only one engine has been operating at Power Plant 1, while Power Plant 4 has been supplying 14.7 megawatts with its nine engines, for a total of 19 megawatts. Saipan needs about 41 megawatts to power the entire island.

The current power crisis at CUC's power plants, however, has reportedly caused the operating costs of Power Plant 4 to go beyond its budget for the year.

PMIC's contract with CUC is only to provide 10.1 megawatts. But because of the power crisis, Power Plant 4 has been supplying 14.7 megawatts.

CUC's contract with PMIC was renewed in 2006 for another 10 years.

NEW MEMBERS JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Newly installed Rotary Club of Saipan members—Bank of Saipan president & CEO Jon Bargfrede and Rainbow Color president Steve Jang—pose for a photo with Rotary president Ben Babauta and secretary Christine Parke shortly after their oath taking at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Giovanni's Restaurant yesterday.

36 police cadets kick off classroom course

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Thirty-six police cadets, including four from Yap, started undergoing a classroom course at the Department of Public Safety's police academy yesterday.

The police cadets—20 from Saipan; five from Tinian; four from Rota; four from Yap; and one each from the Attorney General's Investigative Unit, Division of Immigration, and Office of the Public Auditor—began the training on Aug. 18. They are expected to complete the 16-week academy by the end of December 2008.

Lt. Kevin Aldan, DPS officer-in-charge for training and professional development for police and fire academy, told *Saipan Tribune* that they conducted an orientation with family members of the police cadets yesterday.

Aldan said the command staff oriented the cadets earlier by giving them words of encouragement in order for them to graduate successfully.

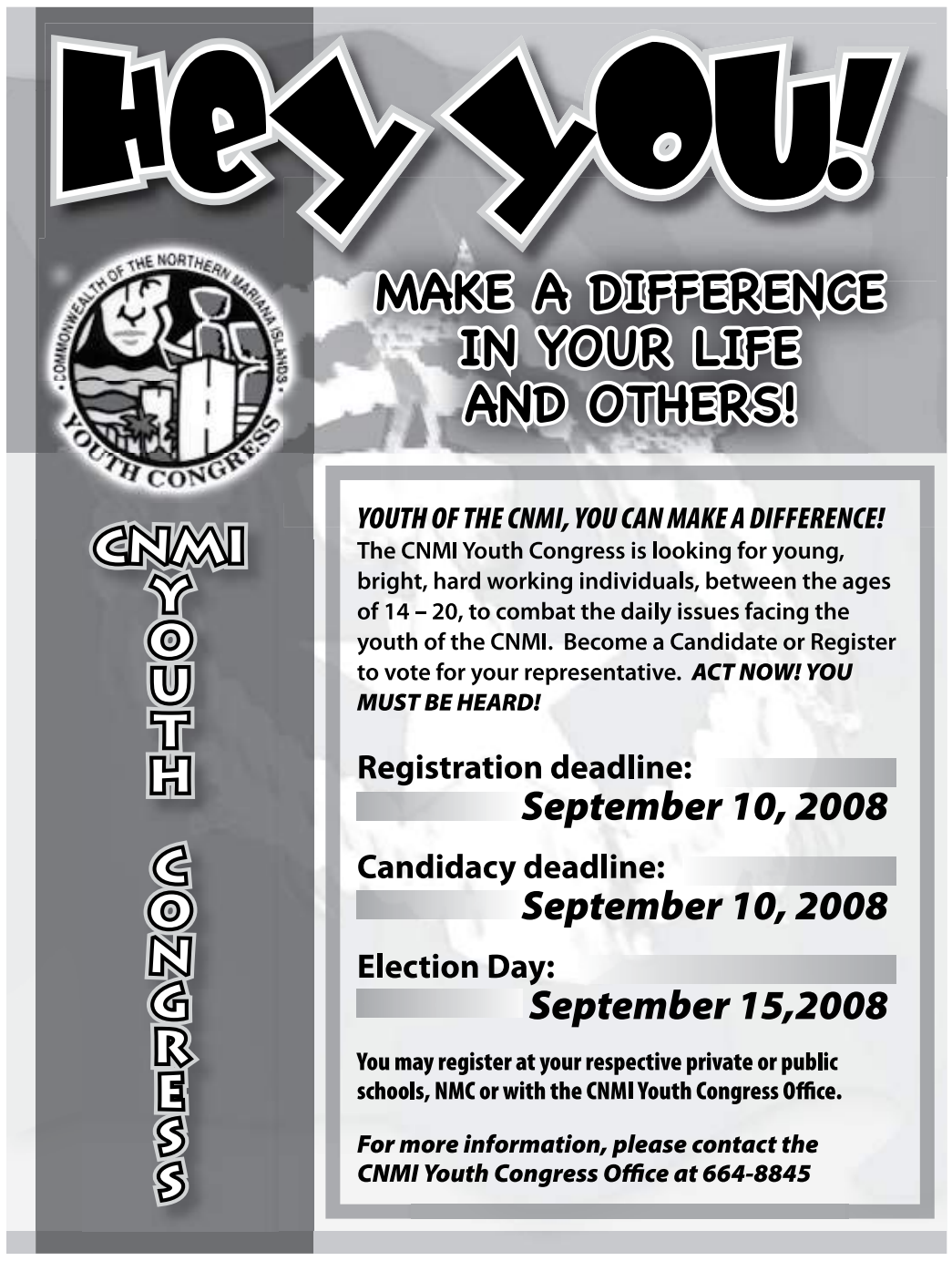
"Tonight[Tuesday] we want to meet with the family and to explain to them what they are going to go through in the academy. It is going to be a stressful environment for them because they're learning new subjects or molding them to become police officers. We're giving them controlled stress environment so we want the family to support them, like helping them with their clothes, preparing meals…" he said.

He said the classroom course included an introduction to the police career, constitutional law, criminal justice, and various other police classes that will be coming up as the academy progresses.

The cadets just did public safety rules and regulations, academy rules and regulations, and the close order drills, and platoon drills both outside and in the class, Aldan said.

With respect to the fire academy, a total of 20 fire cadets, all from Saipan, also started training since Aug. 18. The classroom course began last Wednesday.

"They are all doing good," Aldan said.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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP08-GOV- 094

Program Management:
CNMI Water Task Force

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the CNMI Water Task Force, are soliciting sealed Request for Proposals for Program Management for the Water Task Force on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project Scope of Work will be available at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, on or after **August 22, 2008.**

Questions regarding this Request for Proposal must be submitted in writing to **CNMI Water Task Force**, by facsimile to **(670) 664-2279**, no later than **Friday, September 05, 2008.**

Four (4) copies plus one original of the sealed Proposals must be submitted to the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, MP 96950 no later than **2:00 p.m., (CNMI local time), on September 19, 2008**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

The CNMI reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any imperfections in any proposal if to do so shall be in the best interests of the CNMI. All Proposals shall become the exclusive property of the CNMI government.

TIMOTHY P. VILLAGOMEZ
Lieutenant Governor

HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, Procurement & Supply

Villagomez seeks new cutoff to file motions

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez asked the federal court yesterday to grant him another extension on the deadline for him to file pre-trial motions due to additional documents to be provided him by the U.S. government.

Villagomez's lawyer, Joey P. San Nicolas, said that assistant U.S. attorney Eric O'Malley has no objection to their request to extend the Sept. 8, 2008, deadline for filing the pre-trial motions to Sept. 22, 2008.

San Nicolas, in Villagomez's second motion to extend the deadline, underscored the need for another deadline considering that the U.S. government will provide them with additional discovery after the Sept. 8 deadline.

The lawyer said he spoke with O'Malley last Wednesday and inquired whether the U.S. Attorney's Office would provide additional discovery materials.

San Nicolas said he also inquired from the prosecutor whether the U.S. Attorney's Office would provide a written response to their initial request for discovery materials.

He said O'Malley informed him that additional discovery would be provided in a week and a half and that a written response will be provided at that later date.

The original deadline was set for Aug. 25, 2008. On Aug. 21, U.S. District Court for the NMI chief judge Alex R. Munson extended the deadline to Sept. 8 after Villagomez's counsel and O'Malley entered a stipulation to extend the deadline.

The first extension was made after Villagomez's counsels requested for and received partial discovery.

In Villagomez's first request for extension, San Nicolas stated that the discovery received thus far is voluminous and requires adequate time to review to prepare pre-trial motions in this case.

Meanwhile, attorney Brien Sers Nicholas recently withdrew as co-counsel for Villagomez. The lawyer cited prior commitments requiring him to travel and spend more time in Palau.

Villagomez consented to San Nicholas' withdrawal. Munson granted the motion.

Villagomez's remaining counsels are Joey San Nicolas and Guam lawyer David J. Lujan.

In other developments, Munson recently allowed attorney Ramon Quichocho to replace attorney Richard W. Pierce as counsel for Joaquina V. Santos, who had been indicted with Villagomez.

Last week, Munson also approved the substitution of attorney Victorino DLG. Torres as replacement of attorney Colin Thompson as counsel for former Commerce Secretary James Santos.

Villagomez, James Santos, his wife Joaquina Villagomez Santos, and former Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director Anthony Guerrero were indicted with conspiring to bilk CUC out of thousands of dollars through business deals involving needless chemical purchases for CUC.

Villagomez and the Santos couple pleaded not guilty. Guerrero entered a guilty plea.

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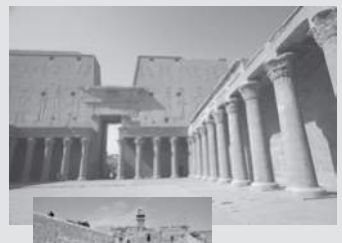

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Governor's Office is TP'ed

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
stefan_sebastian@saipantribune.com
BUSINESS EDITOR

In what may be a symbolic political protest, a guerrilla-style art project or just one local prankster's idea of a fun gag, the bushes outside Gov. Benigno Fitial's offices on Capital Hill got wrapped in toilet paper over the weekend.

Passers-by first noticed the toilet paper on bushes near the front entrance of the governor's office building sometime Sunday. The governor's spokesman, Charles Reyes, said it was still covering some of them when he arrived at the office Tuesday morning and was also "strewn" on the grounds of the property.

"It was wrapped around the bushes in a kind of circular fashion," Reyes said, laughing. "I don't know if they were going for some kind of design."

No police report was filed in the toilet-papering incident, Reyes said, and as of Tuesday afternoon most remnants of the prank had been cleared away.

Toilet papering is a time-tested—and almost cliché—prank that has long served college fraternities, disgruntled Halloween trick-or-treaters and summer camp counselors. Historically, TP-ers have targeted houses, college campuses and, in at least one instance, a major highway off-ramp, rarely causing any property damage.

According to the Web site Wikihow, prankster's should consider a host of factors before TP-ing a building. Some tips:

1) Buy the necessary toilet paper before dark. Large late night purchases will arouse suspicion.

2) Pick a time that is late at night but not too late, so as to prevent one from falling asleep during the activity.

3) To toilet paper a tree or high object, pull an arm's length of toilet paper from the roll and hold onto it while tossing the roll itself over a branch or other point where it might hang. The roll should unravel as it flies through the air.

4) Wear running shoes.

5) Be quiet.

6) Consider targeting the houses of friends, who will likely view the toilet-papering as a joke, rather than strangers who will probably see it as vandalism.

GTA TeleGuam launches digital TV

TAMUNING, Guam—GTA TeleGuam announced yesterday the launch of Guam Digital Television, the newest service in GTA TeleGuam's lineup of communications offerings.

Andrew Gayle, executive vice president of Wireless and Video at GTA TeleGuam said, "Two and half years ago, GTA promised it would bring TV choice to Guam. I am very pleased to be able to tell you that we are now fulfilling the promise we made to the island. Today, GTA is announcing the launch of Guam Digital Television, or what we call GUdTV. This is a historic time for Guam. Customers stateside have long had choices for TV. Now customers on Guam will have a competitive choice for TV service for the first time ever."

Gayle added, "GUdTV has more channels, more high definition TV, and is 100 percent digital. We have a great $99 package deal that offers faster Internet speeds, our typhoon proven phone service and our exciting new Guam Digital Television service, all backed by the 'GTA Always There' guarantee."

GTA plans to roll out GUdTV neighborhood by neighborhood over the next year, currently taking orders for its first two service areas—Dededo and Tumon.

"We thank you for your patience while we improve GUdTV and roll out to your neighborhood. It won't be long and we will keep you updated on our progress. We want to provide a great TV product and we expect demand for GUdTV service to be high. We promise that we will get to your area as soon as possible. For 58 years, GTA has fulfilled its promises to Guam by delivering 'Guam Tough' services that give customers true choice. Now you have a competitive choice for TV," Gayle said. ***(GTA)***

CUC CRISIS JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Deteriorated spare parts found inside CUC's power engines are displayed while CUC executive director Tony Muña addresses the specifics of the island's power crisis to members of the Rotary Club of Saipan at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Giovanni's Restaurant Tuesday.

LOCAL

From Page 1

culture—a burgeoning local shrimp farming business—pointed to reports by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration that inspectors have repeatedly found cancer-causing chemicals in farm-raised Chinese seafood. Local grocery stores, however, continue to carry Chinese farm-raised shrimp and other seafood because of weak import controls, the company says.

"Unfortunately, border control in the CNMI is not as strict as the mainland U.S.," the statement notes. "Our supermarkets are flooded with seafood coming from China and we have no assurance they are free from substances that are potential health hazards."

Chinese exports to the United States have come under increasing scrutiny recently after the deaths of several pets in the American mainland in 2007 were linked to Chinese-made pet foods containing melamine, a chemical found in plastics that the FDA has also encountered in Chinese aquaculture feeds. Recalls of Chinese toys followed that same year after some were found to contain harmful amounts of lead. Moreover, the FDA also halted imports of some Chinese shrimp and fish due to concerns over unsafe drugs used to raise them.

According to staff with the CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife and the local quarantine office, shipments of frozen shrimp imported to the Commonwealth must arrive with paperwork showing they meet standards from their country of origin. A range of other requirements can also apply to shrimp imports—such as quarantines, permits requirements and veterinary certificates—that can vary depending on whether the shrimp are alive or frozen when they arrive.

One local official, however, admitted that when it comes to frozen shrimp shipments "no inspections" are conducted to determine whether they are contaminated with harmful chemicals like those cited by Saipan Aquaculture.

Among the carcinogens the FDA has previously found in Chinese seafood, the company noted, are nitrofuran, malachite green and gentian violet—chemicals known to cause cancer in laboratory animals. Inspectors have also found fluoroquinolone, an antibiotic banned in the United States, in China's seafood exports.

"There's no knowing if these substances are in any of the Chinese shrimp that's being imported," said Mel Catalma, a Saipan Aquaculture staffer. "It's being brought in by the wholesalers."

Chinese shrimp imports have not yet damaged Saipan Aquaculture's business, he added, but the company is concerned about the long-term health consequences they could pose for consumers. The testing facilities needed to determine whether imported seafood is contaminated, he said, are not available on Saipan.

China is the second largest exporter of fish and shrimp to the United States behind Canada, according to statistics from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. In 2006, for example, the United States imported 1.3 billion pounds of shrimp, including 150 million pounds from China, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

902

From Page 1

the new immigration law.

Fitial said in a letter to the Legislature yesterday that he has lost faith in 902 negotiations as a way to address controversies regarding the Covenant. Previous 902 talks have been frustrating and fruitless, he explained.

He added that the immigration law does not allow for negotiating the labor provisions he wants to challenge in court.

"Like the previous experience with Section 902, there are issues raised by the current federalization legislation that can only be resolved by the courts or Congress," Fitial said. "Now that the law has been enacted, the Department of Homeland Security has no authority to negotiate about the provisions of the law that I am considering challenging. That is why resort to the courts under Section 903 [of the Covenant] must be carefully considered."

The governor's letter was in response to some lawmakers' proposal to make the case against federalization using Section 902 of the Covenant, which provides a mechanism by which the CNMI and United States can consult on matters affecting their relationship.

Citing previous 902 talks, Fitial said that Section 902 "does not offer any realistic avenue with respect to the problems raised by the [immigration law]."

"Section 902 has…been a source of frustration and disappointment to the Commonwealth. The past consultations were almost always sought by the CNMI, not by the federal government. The consultations were expensive for the Commonwealth and the results were exceedingly slim. Both sides complained in 1989 to Congress about their disappointments with the process," he said.

The submerged lands issue, the governor said, is one example of basic disputes about the meaning of Covenant provisions that 902 talks have failed to resolve. The issue was resolved against the CNMI in the federal courts.

Fitial also called "brief and fruitless" the last 902 talks held between the CNMI and federal governments. These talks were conducted last year amid congressional moves to pass the now-enacted CNMI immigration law. Although he had previously called the talks "positive and constructive," the governor said the discussions failed because the U.S. government and congressional staff advocating the legislation were not prepared to agree to any changes offered by the Commonwealth.

The enacted version of the immigration measure includes numerous amendments to the original form of the bill.

PP1

From Page 1

Each engine is designed to produce 13 megawatts, and each was regularly producing five megawatts a few weeks ago when they were operational.

"Those units are not producing a sufficient amount that they normally produce," Camacho said. "And currently, we're going to have to continue load shedding."

On Friday, CUC released a revised load shedding schedule where each area experienced three-hour outages three times over a 24-hour period.

CUC was unable to follow the schedule, which was devised for two engines running at Power Plant 1, over the weekend because only engine 6 was working. Some areas experienced outages for as much as eight hours at a time.

Camacho said CUC tries to follow the schedule, but with the current high temperatures and the state of the engines, production output must sometimes be reduced.

Employees were hoping to repair engine 3 and get it running by yesterday evening, which would add five megawatts of power, Camacho said.

Upper Gualo Rai and Taro Sue, which make up feeder 3, also experienced additional outages yesterday when CUC workers repaired an electric pole that was damaged yesterday when a car slammed into it, Camacho said. Employees also installed an air break in the afternoon. The area was without power from about 1:30 pm to 4pm.

With the two engines at Power Plant 1 and the nine engines at Power Plant 4 working, CUC is currently producing approximately 22 to 23 megawatts of power for the island. Approximately 41 megawatts are needed to sufficiently power the island.

The second of four engine units arrived from Aggreko recently. The generators are expected to add 15 to 18 megawatts by Sept. 16 or 17.

CUC

From Page 1

OPA has said that while there was nothing improper about CUC's choice of procurement process, the criteria set forth in the RFP were not specific enough to ensure a fair selection.

Sablan said that CUC management has yet to decide whether to resume the project anytime soon. "Right now, there is no plan to reissue the RFP," he said.

The administration has touted the alternative energy project as a step toward reducing CUC's dependence on fossil fuel and helping end the Commonwealth's power woes.

The project also would have helped CUC comply with the law, which requires green energy to constitute at least 10 percent of the total energy produced by CUC by the end of 2008. Under the same law, CUC must double its alternative energy generation every two years until it reaches 80 percent in 2014.

But as with CUC's previous effort to privatize its power system, the green energy project failed because of an irregular procurement process.

In July 2008, OPA told CUC to review and modify the RFP to comply with CUC's procurement regulations. According to OPA, CUC violated procurement regulations by merely listing factors that will be evaluated in the RFP, without stating how they weigh against each other. "Merely listing factors that will be evaluated in an RFP with no statement of their relative importance is typically a questionable technique for disclosing the relative importance of the factors," OPA said.

The order came after Telesource CNMI Inc., as a prospective proposer, questioned the RFP.

Proposals from six different companies on island and elsewhere around the globe were rejected as a result of CUC's decision. The companies that submitted proposals were New Seoul Corp. and Commonwealth Industrial Supply Co. Inc., both located on Saipan; OCCEES Ocean Engineering & Energy Systems in Hawaii; Leminiscate Investment LLC in Florida; United Systems Engineering Co. Ltd. in Taiwan; and Lucid Energy Technologies LLC in Indiana.

Garment agreement saves 3 workers' jobs

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A timely garment agreement has saved the jobs of three alien workers who were previously denied transfer to a new employer.

Labor Administrative Hearing Officer Jerry Cody ordered the employer, Zhong Run Commercial Co. Inc., to file applications for conditional grants of transfer for the three workers—Hui Zhu Chen, Xiang Zhong Wu, and Xiu Chun Wang.

Cody

Cody, however, warned the workers that they cannot begin working until the conditional grants are approved by the Labor director or his designee.

He ordered the employer to keep production records detailing the number of pieces it produces under its Garment Services Agreement with U.S. CNMI Development Corp. for each of the next four months.

The hearing officer also directed the employer to provide the Labor director any follow-up agreement that replaces the Garment Services Agreement, which expires on Dec. 15, 2008.

"Such agreements will be made available for the Labor director's review upon request," Cody said.

According to Labor records, in early 2008, Zhong Run Commercial filed three permit transfer applications to hire Chen, Wu, and Wang.

The Labor Division denied the applications on the grounds that Zhong Run Commercial's income was insufficient to justify the hiring of additional employees.

The employer and the workers appealed.

On July 25, 2008, Cody issued several administrative orders affirming the Labor director's denial of those permit transfer applications.

Ten days after the hearing, Zhong Run Commercial submitted a written request for reconsideration of the orders. The employer cited its newly-signed service agreement with garment manufacturer US CNMI Development Corp.

In his administrative order issued last week, Cody said the prior orders were based on the Labor director's assessment that the employer's wages exceeded its income in the first quarter of 2008.

After the hearing, however, Cody said, Zhong Run Commercial reached a "Garment Services Agreement" with the manufacturer, US CNMI Development Corp.

Under the agreement, the manufacturer ordered 35,000 pieces of finished garments from Zhong Run Commercial at a price of $1.80 per piece.

As further evidence of its relationship with the manufacturer, Cody noted, Zhong Run Commercial produced three checks totaling more than $40,000 that it received from U.S. CNMI Garment Corp. in 2008, under different supply agreements.

The 35,000-piece order, he said, will require a four-month effort from Zhong Run Commercial's entire work force and will yield $63,000 in income for the company.

Based on the newly produced evidence, the Labor director recommended that its denial be reversed and these applications allowed to be processed.

Cody agreed that the applications should be reversed, provided that Zhong Run Commercial meet certain requirements.

'CHC pharmacy remains open'

Reports that the Commonwealth Health Center's in-house pharmacy is closed are false, CHC legal counsel Alex Gorman said yesterday.

"I don't know where that's coming from. It's not true," he said.

The pharmacy has been closed during the last few weekends but remains open during the week with one pharmacist, he said.

"The Administration is aware of the problem" and is working to correct it, Gorman said.

CHC is currently working on a contract for a part-time pharmacist to work on the weekends, he added.

For now, Gorman said, workers try to anticipate the needs for the weekend and mix the necessary drugs ahead of time.

It's not an ideal situation, he said, but they are making do.

"It's always better to have the pharmacy open," he said. "At this point, things are adequate. That's the best word I can come up with."

A private pharmacy, PHI Pharmacy, is also operating inside the hospital, located just at the main entrance of the building.

Gorman said reports that Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez was on leave were also false. He was in the office yesterday and last week, he added.

But reports that Joseph Santos resigned from the position of Deputy Secretary for Hospital Administration are correct, he said. Santos resigned for personal reasons; it has nothing to do with the administration, Gorman said.

John Flores is the current acting Secretary for Hospital Administration. ***(Kristi Eaton)***

LABOR DAY PICNIC
Saipan residents listen to music, play games and hold barbecues with their families and friends as they spend their Labor Day at Micro Beach Monday afternoon.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

NMI team a hit at the Domatsuri festival

The CNMI delegation joins dance teams from all over Japan onstage during the concluding rites for the 10th Annual Domatsuri Festival in Nagoya, Japan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Domatsuri team from the CNMI recently concluded their tour in Nagoya during the 10th Annual Domatsuri Festival.

The CNMI team was considered a special guest and, although they were the smallest group, they were very popular among the performers, who were inspired by the small but very energetic delegation and were amazed at the attire worn by the CNMI team.

The Domatsuri Festival is the biggest festival in Nagoya, taking place each summer and attracting dancers from all over Japan. In order to compete, the groups have to have at least 40 members, but throughout the whole festival the groups had more than 100 members each.

The history of the Festival started in 1999, when a group of college students created a dance festival that would communicate the excitement of dance in Nagoya and to express that excitement to the outside world. The first festival had only 26 dance teams with 1,500 performers. Today, the festival welcomes 200 dance teams with 23,000 performers from inside and outside Japan, and some 1.85 million viewers. It has become one of the largest such events in Japan.

Five years ago, through Chamolinan Cultural Village Inc., Pacific Development Inc., Marianas Visitors Authority and the Saipan Mayor's Office, the Domatsuri performers from Nagoya were introduced to the CNMI, joining the Liberation Day festivities as a part of their way of expressing the importance of fostering a good relation between people and both countries through Domatsuri.

The participation of the CNMI delegation in the Domatsuri festival was made possible with the help of Northwest Airlines and Marianas Visitors Authority, which both sponsored the group; and to Mayor Juan B. Tudela.

In return, the CNMI received half a million dollars worth of free advertising through the Domatsuri event, from commemorative booklets and media exposure, to the millions of viewers watching the event on nationwide Japanese television. ***(PR)***

The CNMI delegation is led by Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela, center, Pacific Development Inc. president Yoichi Matsumura, standing second from right, PDI manager Gordon Marciano, standing second from left, and Mayor's Office staff Tony Benavente, leftmost.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The CNMI delegation performs onstage at the 10th Annual Domatsuri Festival in Nagoya, Japan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The dancers from Saipan pose with Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela and overall Domatsuri chair Kunihiko Okada.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Awaodori Team joins annual festivity

A group of Saipan students recently returned to the islands after performing a traditional Japanese dance at the Awaodori festival in Ko-Enji, Tokyo, Japan.

The CNMI delegation, which left for Japan on Aug. 20 and returned on Aug. 28, performed with the Tokyo Tensuiren Group on Aug. 22 and 23, and was included during the parade of performers.

Before going to Japan, the students were taught the dance steps by members of the Tensuiren, Awaodori Traditional Dance Group, which hails from Ko-Enji, Tokyo.

Awaodori is a famous traditional Japanese dance that began in Tokushima City in Shikoku and Koenji in Tokyo. Awaodori is a celebratory dance for both the young and old, men and women, and boys and girls.

Awaodori is part of the Bon festivities in Japan. They are held to welcome one's ancestors back into the world for a few days. Though Bon dances are usually performed in a circle, Awaodori participants march in a straight line. The dancers are grouped into teams called ren, which are usually made up several dozen dancers. They march through the streets in unison to music performed on the shamisen, flute, drums, and bells. ***(JV)***

The Saipan performers have a group picture taken before performing with the Tokyo Tensuiren Group on Aug. 23.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Tensuiren group members Benigno Sablan, Ronald Fitipol, Norman and Freeman Defang dance with the Tokyo Tensuiren during a Tokyo street performance.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Group photo before the Aug. 24 performance.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

DPH, DEQ examine student safety as school nears

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno Fitial yesterday requested several departments to examine the health effects and preparedness of the Public School System to deal with the power outages as the beginning of the school years nears.

Representatives from the Division of Environmental Quality, Department of Public Health, and the Bureau of Environmental Health discussed the opening with PSS Commissioner Rita Sablan present, said Joseph Kevin Villagomez, Secretary of Public Health.

"In particular, we are to look at whether the schools will be able to have running water during periods of power outages," Villagomez said. "Running water, especially to the toilets, are critical to maintain public health."

Two weeks ago, Fitial asked PSS Board of Education chair Lucy Blanco-Maratita to consider pushing back the start of school until power was stabilized, but the board voted last week to begin school as scheduled on Monday.

Charles Reyes Jr., press secretary for the Governor's Office, said Fitial requested yesterday's meeting to ensure schools would be able to comply with health regulations until Sept. 16, when the Aggreko generators are expected to be operational.

DEQ will be testing water at the various schools today and will have results ready by tomorrow, Villagomez said. DPH will work to make sure each of the schools has a generator to power water through the pumps, he added.

Reyes said Sablan, who could not be reached for comment yesterday, discussed various strategies PSS administrators have formulated to cope with the outages.

DEQ will focus on testing water at the public schools and will eventually test private schools. Many private schools on island started several weeks ago.

The island has regularly been operating on 19 to 24 megawatts of power for the last few weeks, forcing many areas to go without power for as much as eight hours at a time. Approximately 41 megawatts are needed to sufficiently power the island. The Aggreko generators should provide an additional 15 to 18 megawatts.

Besides Villagomez and Sablan, other attendees at the meeting were: Frank Rabauliman, DEQ director; Joe Kaipat, DEQ Water Manager; Lynn Tenorio, deputy Secretary for Public Health Administration; Richard Brostrom, Public Health medical director; Alex Gorman, DPH legal counsel; and John Tagabuel, Bureau of Environmental Health manager.

Pros and cons of marine monument proposal in today's Chamber meeting

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will be holding its monthly general membership meeting today, Sept. 3, at the Saipan Grand Hotel, with President Bush's marine monument proposal at the center of the featured presentation.

According to Chamber executive director Kyle Calabrese, this meeting will be a little bit different from the usual Chamber presentations.

"It will feature an exciting twist on our usual format: we have invited representatives of the opposing viewpoints concerning the proposed marine monument to join us; both sides will be given equal time to explain to us their perspectives about why the proposal is something the Commonwealth should or should not embrace, in its current form," said Calabrese in an e-mail. "In light of recent developments in Washington concerning the proposal, which have been extensively covered in the local and national media, we are certain this will be an informative and lively meeting."

The guest speakers will be Jay Nelson of the Pew Environmental Group; Sylvan Igisomar, director of the Fish and Wildlife Division of DLNR; and Dr. John Joyner, director of the Costal Resources Management Office.

Members will also hear briefly about National Preparedness Month (September) from Ted Untalan and Ken Shankweiler.

Registration and lunch will begin at 11:30, and the meeting will begin at noon. Meeting fees are $15 for members, $20 for guests of members, and $25 for general public. ***(SCC)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

ACT meeting on Thursday

There will be an Association of Commonwealth Teachers meeting on Thursday, Sept. 4, 7pm, at the San Vicente Elementary cafeteria.

The agenda topic will focus on recommendations to the Board of Education regarding Highly Qualified Teacher requirements.

All interested members of the public invited. ***(PR)***

Japan exchange program deadline set

Saipan Mayor Juan B.Tudela wished to inform all parents who are interested to send their children to Japan in October for the KSKK program under the Student Cultural Exchange that the deadline to submit all applications will be this Friday, Sept. 5, 2008, no later than 4pm.

All applications must be submitted to the Saipan Mayor's Office during regular working hours from 7:30am to 11:30am and from 12:30pm to 4:30pm. Call or come to the Saipan Mayor's Office and ask for Jemalyn Tenorio for details. (PR)

MHS calendar of activities

Sept. 2 - 3: School level Professional Development days
Sept. 3: Freshmen Orientation Schedule: MHS Cafeteria
■ Freshmen last names beginning with-ending with:
A-Delos Reyes: 1 p.m.-2p.m. (Ms. Tudela)
Dlg-Le: 2 p.m.-3p.m. (Mr. Cabrera)
Li-Reyes: 3p.m.-4p.m. (Ms. Vivao)
Ri-Z: 4 p.m.-5 p.m. (Ms. Cabrera)
Sept. 4 - 5: State level Professional Development days
Sept. 8: First Day of School
■ Students report to Homeroom at 7:50am
■ Refer to Homeroom Listing in school bulletin board (Bldg A)
■ Homeroom List will be posted on Sep 02 for advance viewing by students/parents
■ Class schedules will be distributed on the first day of school

Note to parents: Please drive slowly; follow school signs and safety officers. For questions and concerns, contact 237-3206. ***(PR)***

Calling on CNMI Delegate candidates

The people of Kagman and Precinct 5 would like to get to know all the candidates for the CNMI Delegate position. The community will be having a public forum on Sept. 20 at 5pm at the Kagman Community Center. It will be hosted by the Kagman Komunidat Association. Candidates will get the chance to present themselves and where they stand.

If you are interested in meeting with the Kagman and Precinct 5 public, contact the Kagman Komunidat Association president Jesse Torres at balutan@balutanbox.com for more info. ***(PR)***

NGA DELEGATES CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, center, greets Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, now the GOP vice presidential candidate, at an NGA Conference earlier this year. Also in the photo is Guam Gov. Felix Camacho.

SHIPPING SCHEDULE

MARIANA EXPRESS LINES PTE. LTD.

Outbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETD Jakarta	ETD Bangkok	ETD P. Kelang	ETD Melbourne	ETD Singapore	ETD Hochiminh	ETD Busan	ETD Kobe	ETD Shanghai	ETD Auckland	ETD Manila	ETD Hongkong	ETD Kaoshiung	ETD Naha
MELL SENOKO	009E	8/23 Sat	8/21 Thu	8/21 Thu	8/12 Tue	8/16 Sat	8/29 Fri	8/25 Mon	8/24 Sun	8/19 Tue	8/10 Sun	8/25 Mon	8/29 Fri	8/30 Sat	9/2 Tue
MELL SINGAPORE	014E	8/30 Sat	8/28 Thu	8/28 Thu	8/19 Tue	8/23 Sat	9/5 Fri	9/1 Mon	8/31 Sun	8/26 Tue	8/17 Sun	9/1 Mon	9/5 Fri	9/6 Sat	9/9 Tue
STADT HAMBURG	022E	9/6 Sat	9/4 Thu	9/4 Thu	8/26 Tue	8/30 Sat	9/12 Fri	9/8 Mon	9/7 Sun	9/2 Tue	8/24 Sun	9/8 Mon	9/12 Fri	9/13 Sat	9/16 Tue
MELL SENOKO	010E	9/13 Sat	9/11 Thu	9/11 Thu	9/9 Tue	9/6 Sat	9/19 Fri	9/15 Mon	9/14 Sun	9/9 Tue	9/7 Sun	9/15 Mon	9/19 Fri	9/20 Sat	9/23 Tue
MELL SINGAPORE	015E	9/20 Sat	9/18 Thu	9/18 Thu	9/16 Tue	9/13 Sat	9/26 Fri	9/22 Mon	9/21 Sun	9/14 Sun	9/14 Sun	9/22 Mon	9/26 Fri	9/27 Sat	9/30 Tue
STADT HAMBURG	023E	9/27 Sat	9/25 Thu	9/25 Thu	9/23 Tue	9/20 Sat	10/3 Fri	9/29 Mon	9/28 Sun	9/21 Sun	9/21 Sun	9/29 Mon	10/3 Fri	10/4 Sat	10/7 Tue

Inbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETA Guam	ETD Guam	ETA Saipan	ETA Yap	ETA Koror	ETA GenSan	ETA Davao	ETA Cebu	ETA Hongkong	ETA Kaoshiung	ETA Busan	ETA Yokohama	ETA Manila	ETA Singapore
MELL SENOKO	009E	9/6 Sat	9/7 Sun	9/7 Sun	SKIP	9/11 Thu	9/12 Fri	9/13 Sat	9/16 Tue	9/19 Fri	9/20 Sat	9/25 Thu	9/23 Tue	9/21 Sun	9/24 Wed
MELL SINGAPORE	014E	9/13 Sat	9/14 Sun	9/14 Sun	9/16 Tue	9/18 Thu	9/19 Fri	9/20 Sat	9/23 Tue	9/26 Fri	9/27 Sat	10/2 Thu	9/30 Tue	9/28 Sun	10/1 Wed
STADT HAMBURG	022E	9/20 Sat	9/21 Sun	9/21 Sun	SKIP	9/25 Thu	9/26 Fri	9/27 Sat	9/30 Tue	10/3 Fri	10/4 Sat	10/9 Thu	10/7 Tue	10/5 Sun	10/8 Wed
MELL SENOKO	010E	9/27 Sat	9/28 Sun	9/28 Sun	9/30 Tue	10/2 Thu	10/3 Fri	10/4 Sat	10/7 Tue	10/10 Fri	10/11 Sat	10/16 Thu	10/14 Tue	10/12 Sun	10/15 Wed
MELL SINGAPORE	015E	10/4 Sat	10/5 Sun	10/5 Sun	SKIP	10/9 Thu	10/10 Fri	10/11 Sat	10/14 Tue	10/17 Fri	10/18 Sat	10/23 Thu	10/21 Tue	10/19 Sun	10/22 Wed
STADT HAMBURG	023E	10/11 Sat	10/12 Sun	10/12 Sun	10/14 Tue	10/16 Thu	10/17 Fri	10/18 Sat	10/21 Tue	10/24 Fri	10/25 Sat	10/30 Thu	10/28 Tue	10/26 Sun	10/29 Wed

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CTSI Logistics
Moving the world

PSS gets $600K more for food programs

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is increasing the amount of grant money the Public School System will receive for their nutrition programs this year.

PSS will receive an additional $600,000 to cover the higher costs of living, for a total of approximately $7.7 million, said Federal Programs advisor Tim Thornburgh.

"We really, really need that," he said of the increase.

Rice alone has doubled, he added, and "the cost of milk is way up."

PSS will use the grant to increase the amount of money food vendors are paid for each meal, Thornburgh said.

"We're confident it'll be enough," he said. "It should be sufficient based on the current day costs."

Vendors on Saipan will now be paid $2.85 per lunch, a 10-cent increase from last year. Vendors on Rota and Tinian will receive $3 per lunch meal.

Students will continue to pay 75 cents per lunch meal.

PNG plans $280M schools upgrade

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (The National/PIR)—The Papua New Guinea government has unveiled a two-pronged plan worth over PGK700 million [US$280 million] to improve infrastructure in schools and address textbook shortage in schools.

The massive funding comes at a time when public attention has been directed at deteriorating infrastructure and facilities in schools, and poor results associated with the outcome – based learning system, introduced six years ago.

Cabinet last Wednesday approved K500 million to be spent over five years for the supply of textbooks and curriculum materials to all elementary, prep and primary schools.

This new funding is additional to K230 million the Education Department already had sitting in a trust account in a commercial bank, ready to be drawn down for infrastructure development projects.

Acting Education Minister Sani Rambi announced the textbook and infrastructure plans at a press conference in Port Moresby last Friday.

Rambi said K100 million would be provided by the Government every year for five years to ensure each school received textbooks and curriculum materials, which currently were lacking.

He said the current ratio of students to textbook was 10 to one, and in many remote schools, it was 20 students to one textbook.

"None of our children can learn properly under these conditions. We have the money now to change that and improve conditions."

He said the first K100 million was expected to come from the Supplementary Budget expected to be announced this month.

Next year onwards, this money would be included in the Education Department's recurrent budget.

He said this year, 40% of the K100 million would be spent on transport and freight to ensure the textbooks got to the schools before the start of the 2009 school year.

Rambi said a supplier would be selected through open tender.

The huge funding for textbooks and infrastructure was expected to address three problems associated with outcome – based learning. They were the unavailability of resources, poor quality of teachers, and poor classrooms.

FIESTA'S SALES TEAM

The friendly Fiesta Resort & SPA Saipan Food & Beverage Sales Team composed of Rina, Dennis, Roxanne and Socorro are currently promoting the Holiday Incentives offered by the hotel. F&B Manger Lance Razon said the hotel now offers "the best holiday banquet incentive you can find to make your company party memorable!" The sales team will be visiting offices on island to hand out sales kits and explain the marketing program and provide fliers for the ongoing activities at the Fiesta Resort & SPA.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PACIFIC BRIEFS

Vanuatu police ready as polls begin

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—About 120 police will be on the streets of the Vanuatu capital, Port Vila tomorrow, to provide security on election day. About 170,000 registered voters will take part in the poll to elect a new 52-seat parliament. Deputy Police Commissioner, Arthur Caulton, says the main job is keeping the ballot boxes safe, including holding onto the keys for them. "We have had incidents in the past whereby ballot boxes were burnt in Tanna and we expect that similar incidents could happen, especially in Tanna and Port Vila with the new regulation involving rural voters to come to Port Vila and vote, we expect that there will be some discontent." Arthur Caulton says so far the campaign has been relatively peaceful, although there have been a few incidents, and he hopes it will stay that way.

Solomons threaten to cancel logging licenses

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—In Solomon Islands, the Isabel Provincial Government is threatening to cancel the business licenses of logging companies operating in the Province if their outstanding debts are not settled. Provincial Treasurer, Patteson Devi said they have engaged legal firm, Pacific Lawyers to pursue this matter with the logging companies who owe the Province US$1.5 million. Parts of that debt date back to 2004. The Province has issued a notice in the media for the companies concerned to justify why their license should not be cancelled. The notice also stated the Province will refuse, cancel and revoke all business licenses issued to all businesses and companies operating and carrying out felling of logs and timbers for export in Isabel. The Province says non payment of business licenses by the loggers has adversely affected the delivery of essential services.

Undersea cable to link New Caledonia, Sydney

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—An undersea fiber optic cable linking New Caledonia and Sydney is to be put into service today with a promise of massively cheaper Internet rates. The 2,200 kilometer cable was laid in a venture between New Caledonia's postal service and Alcatel Submarine Network at a cost of more than US$120 million. New Caledonian president Harold Martin says the launch of the cable marks a great event for telecommunications and for New Caledonia. He says before the end of the year a budget internet service will be launched as part of government efforts to lower the cost of living. Plans are also afoot to link New Caledonia with French Polynesia.

Pacific police in Samoa for regional conference

MELBOURNE, Australia (Radio Australia/PIR)—The 37th annual Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police Conference will begin in Samoa today. Joint training, intelligence sharing and the threat of transnational crime are topics expected to be on the agenda for regional police chiefs. Tony Annandale, Executive Director of the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police Secretariat says the annual conference is important for the region. "Particularly in today's environment. Particularly with transnational crime," he said. "It's important that the chiefs gets together and discuss issues both on a national basis and also more on a regional basis, about how they can help each other tackle issues such as transnational crime, but also to share ideas and initiatives that they have in their own individual jurisdictions that might be applicable in national jurisdictions of their colleagues."

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

September 03, 1999

JAL to cut fare in Oct.
Japan Airlines will reduce by 50 percent its airfare in October, November and December 1999 as well as February and March 2000 as part of JAL's commitment to increase visitor arrivals in the CNMI. Before the end of 1999, JAL will operate nine charter flights to Saipan, three each in the months of October, November and December from Nagoya. The next millennium will be greeted by JAL with a total of eight more Nagoya-Saipan charter flights in January, February and March, 2000. Likewise, JAL will have eight more charter flights from Fukuoka to Saipan.

US Rep. Schaffer ends low-key visit on Saipan
A ranking member of the U.S. House Resources Committee ended yesterday a low-key visit to the Northern Marianas in what appeared to be part of the elaborate preparation for the forthcoming oversight hearing on the island's conditions in Washington D.C. Rep. Bob Schaffer (R-Colorado) was the latest in a string of visitors from Congress who toured the island in recent weeks following the visit of Manase Mansur, chief aide to Resources Committee Chairman Don Young (R-Alaska), and Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa).

Asylum seekers sue US, CNMI governments
Two asylum seekers, one of them a former student activist in Beijing, yesterday asked the federal court to stop the US and CNMI governments from sending them back to China where they are facing persecution. Rui Lang and Liao Da Nian are both incarcerated in the CNMI Immigration Detention Center on overstaying charges. They are awaiting the Superior Court's decision on the Department of Labor and Immigration's bid to have them deported.

September 03, 2001

No quick fix for NMI economy
The Northern Marianas is trapped in a period of economic uncertainty, brought mainly by the four-year slump in visitor arrivals and the declining volume of apparel exports made by Saipan's garment manufacturers. This was the gist of a report presented Friday to local government officials and business sector leaders by Bank of Hawaii's Regional Economist Dr. Wali M. Osman.

Drug peddling in school happens, says principal
The principal of the Marianas High School admitted Friday that there have been cases of drug peddling within the school premises, after a boy was reportedly caught with a bagful of marijuana sometime last week. But James Denight, the school's principal, said such cases merely involved "a joint or two" of marijuana, and that no large trafficking of prohibited drugs have ever happened within the school premises.

Phosphate ban just a step behind
Here's good news for the environment! The bill that would ban the sale, manufacture, distribution, and use of cleaning agents containing phosphates now heads to the desk of Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio after it sailed through the Senate on a unanimous vote during last week's session. Voting 8-0, the Senate passed House Bill 12-167 without amendments, ensuring its speedy passage into law.

September 03, 2002

Treasury releases $200K refunds
The Division of Treasury will be mailing out today another batch of refund checks worth about $200,000, in the wake of the recent release of scholarship checks amounting to approximately the same amount. It was not learned, however, as to how many checks this amount translates to. Treasurer Antonette Calvo declined to issue any statement when Saipan Tribune checked with the Treasury Friday afternoon. However, a female Treasury employee who answered the Tribune's telephone call said they were already processing the checks.

Construction of mini mall at Saipan airport to start
The Commonwealth Ports Authority disclosed Friday that construction of a two-storey mall at the Saipan International Airport, which is seen to increase the agency's revenue collection, will start this month. CPA Executive Director Carlos H. Salas said port officials have finalized negotiations with the Saipan Rainbow, Inc., the firm that would undertake the construction of the mini-mall at the SIA, which would provide an array of services to Saipan's departing and arriving passengers.

Giovanni's Turns 13

The competent and dedicated management and staff of Hyatt Regency Saipan gather for a photo as they celebrate Giovanni's Restaurant's 13th birthday last Friday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Hyatt Regency Saipan general manager Nick Nikishawa slices the birthday cake while executive chef Gabriele Colombo looks on.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Hyatt Regency Saipan executive chef Gabriele Colombo with Giovanni's Restaurant aficionados.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

The executives of Hyatt Regency Saipan headed by its general manager Nick Nikishawa gather for a photo.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Violin maestro Ao Zhang and friends cheer for Giovanni's Restaurant.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Office of Insular Affairs field representative Jeff Schorr and other special guests smile for the camera.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Distinguished guests celebrate the success of Hyatt Regency Saipan Giovanni's restaurant.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Pacific Wines and Spirits' Orleyne Tabucanon joins the executives of Hyatt Regency Saipan.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Hyatt Regency Saipan Giovanni's restaurant is elegantly decorated in celebration of its 13th birhday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XVIII, Issue No. 247

Published daily at 2/F CIC Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

Respect is at the heart of America's attitude toward work

In the fall campaign, you may hear talk now and then about the dangers of "class warfare" when the debate turns to such things as the tax structure, health care and other matters having to do with who gets what in this roiling republic. Don't pay it too much attention. Those who use such language need to acquaint themselves with real class warfare, as practiced, say, in Russia (among other places), where much of the country's vast underclass went on a rampage a little less than a century ago against just about anyone labeled "bourgeois," whatever that meant. The resulting years of warfare, repression and hair-raising atrocities were class warfare. Arguing for marginal income tax rates and changes in health care is not.

That Americans have never gone in much for real class warfare is probably due in large part to the persistence of a sturdy, almost indestructible belief in what can be achieved by work. From its earliest days, America has been a magnet for people who see it as a place where their hard work will be rewarded. Many have failed, but apparently not enough to discourage the millions who continue to come to this country and perform some of its most vital tasks as well as much of its hardest and least appreciated labor. The virtue of work and the rewards due it have always been a basic American principle, the cruel violation of which nearly tore the country apart a century and a half ago. As Abraham Lincoln put it in 1858, the spirit of slavery was: "You work and toil and earn bread, and I'll eat it." Better than anyone, he saw how deeply un-American this was, and how it undermined the respect that was owed to the work of a whole class of men and women.

America has hardly been free of exploitation and abuses of working people, but it has managed to maintain, and to some extent achieve, the ideal of a society in which free people can gain some degree of comfort and security through their labors. The people one passes every day—swinging pickaxes, toting iron rods at construction sites, putting up drywall, making hotel beds—generally take pride in what they do and in doing it well. But are they becoming invisible to many of us? Is their work regarded as menial, trivial, unworthy of consideration? Is the growing inequality of incomes, residential separation and the unsettled situation of millions of working people who are in this country in violation of its inadequate and outdated immigration laws eroding the sense of commonality that is vital to the country's future? These are things worth thinking about on this first Monday in September—and on the first Tuesday in November.

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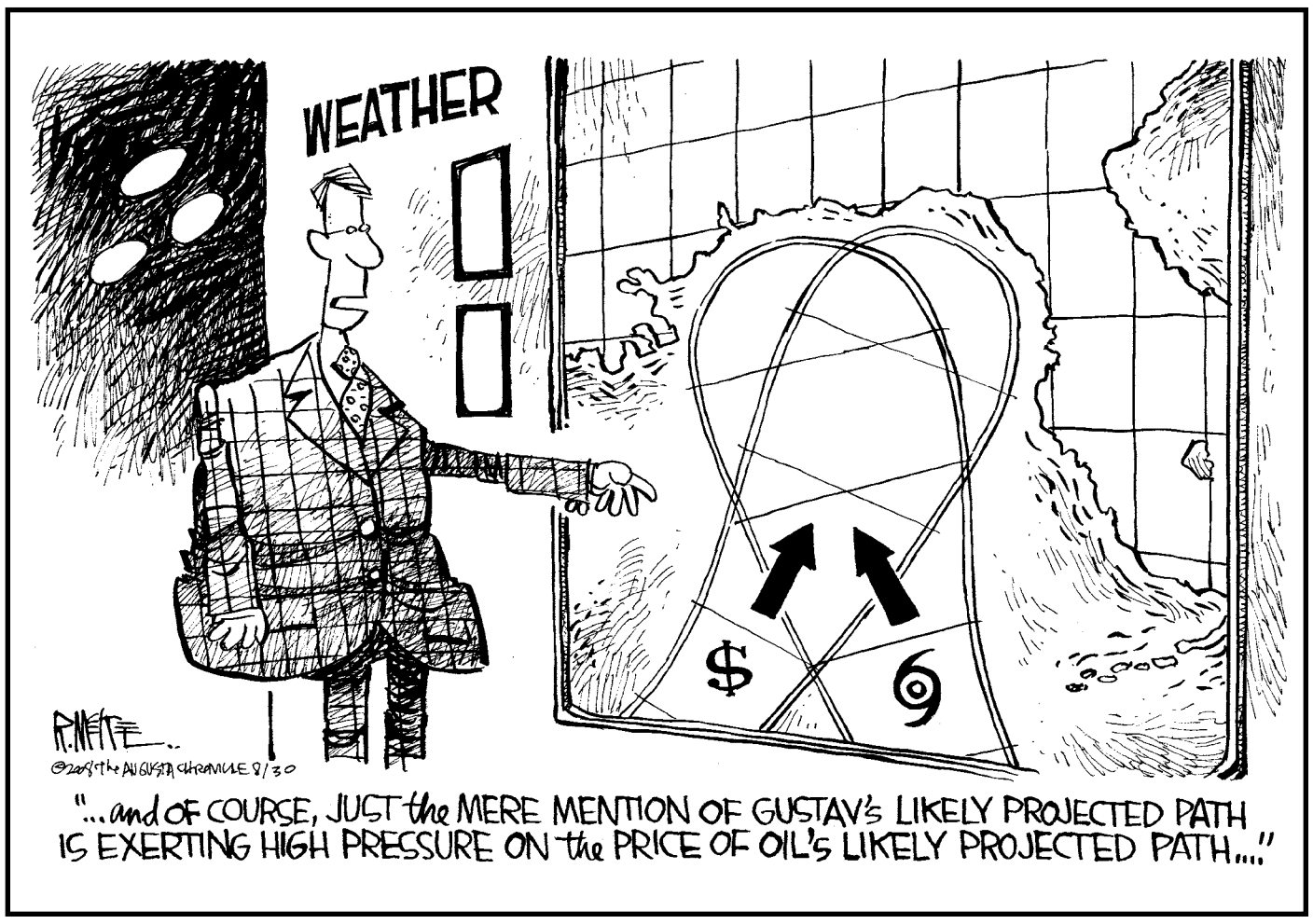
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"...and OF COURSE, JUST the MERE MENTION OF GUSTAV'S LIKELY PROJECTED PATH IS EXERTING HIGH PRESSURE ON the PRICE OF OIL'S LIKELY PROJECTED PATH..."

PoliSci for beginners

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section.*

"Politics is the deliberation on how we order our lives together," said Aristotle, the Greek tutor to the Macedonian Alexander. "Politics is the science of the possible," is the current slogan of polished politicians.

Political economy, the academic discipline that emerged and flourished with Malthus, has been the classic understanding of the way economics was to be beheld, not as the science to human's response to the drive to survive, but as a discipline in parceling out the scarce resource in a world where "the poor will always be with us." It is no wonder that English Divines called it "the dismal science."

Malthus was actually preceded by another Thomas. Hobbes' famous 1651 book *Leviathan* established the foundation for most of Western political philosophy from the perspective of social contract theory. Humans are inherently selfish, he would claim, and are predisposed to kill each other to preserve themselves, thus the necessity of a social contract, the requisite forerunner to our contemporary state/national political institutions.

One can feel the long shadow of Augustine's "original sin," and the pervasive influence of Christian dogma on the untrustworthiness of being human, casting everyone from the beginning as needing to be saved. Marry that to Hobbes and Malthus and one has a political economy that is based on "dog-eat-dog" and the varied methods of one-up-wo/manship widely practiced today!

Ex-Dominican Matthew Fox countered original sin with original blessings, and Christian theology had not been the same ever since. Creation spirituality has recovered the virtue of the human scale once more.

My first trip to Saipan in the late '80s was on the invitation of a friend who was launching a political career. He was overwhelmed by his deep sense that to even venture into the field is to be considered a profound honor, a status befitting the elite. He broke down in tears at the announcement of his candidacy.

Having just lived through the People's Power politics of the Philippines, I was not prepared for my friend's sense of the political field that beckoned more to the age of the Man of La Mancha than to the *Chamorii* who needed to bring order and social stability in the socio-economic cauldron brewing in Saipanda. This was the period when Reagan's executive penchant for deregulation and the tweaking of the dollar to seek a level of comfort vis-à-vis other currencies, especially the yen, that we witnessed the influx of Nippon's investments into the Far East and Pacifica, and casting the mold of our island's economy.

We still suffer from this sense of politics narrowed down to the workings of the electoral process where the holding of elected public office is primarily an attainment of personal and familial status of the privileged few, a pathway to upward social mobility.

Happily, the world has changed. The U.S. declaration of independence itself speaks of self-evident truths like "all men (sic) are created equal" and that all are endowed with inalienable rights. In this vein, a century later, Abe Lincoln would thunder in Gettysburg the much quoted phrase "that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

In 1920, we finally gave the women in the United States the right to vote. Less than a century later, Hillary Clinton dared to shatter the crystal ceiling to the White House and has triumphed wonderfully toward that effort. A woman President is no longer a matter of whether or not, but a question of "when." Former congressional Speaker Tip O'Neill's famous "All politics is local" points to one of those self-evident truths, and post-1964 Civil Rights legislation, 45 years to the day when Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his famous "I have a dream" speech in Washington, D.C., Barack Obama might very well become the first man of African-American descent to occupy 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.

Moving then out of the picture of simply the electoral process, how might we picture politics? The second process (the first, being to survive, and the third, the search for meaning) that all humans and its societies have is in response to the drive for order, for the organization of society through law-making and law-enforcing bodies so that there is security and justice for all. This is the political dimension of every social order from the local to the global.

Three words would point to three dynamics in this dimension: order, justice and welfare (well-being). Processes that enforce social stability, provide security to the resident population, and sustain the equilibrium of social power define the ordering dynamic. Processes which spell out the consent to be governed, ensure equity so that everyone can assume responsibility and ownership in decision-making, and structures built to adequately care for everyone—especially the sick, the elderly, the poor and the outsider—are indications that corporate justice is being done. Beyond the currently reduced meaning of "welfare," processes that establishes all-round well-being and well-doing, ensuring people's access to food, shelter and social benefits, including the efforts of the civil society beyond public order, all inclusive of the political process of welfare.

Taotao Tano's clamor for respect, and recovery of integrity, is deeply rooted in the tradition of the people of the land. This needs to be balanced with the *Remetau's (Taotao Tasi)* experience that before the storm, one cares only on the ability of the other to assist in navigating the sails and steering the rudder of the ship of the State, and that might mean working with those who we might not otherwise sup with the night before. Or, that we jettison those who might decide to be deadwood to lighten the load even if one is a close relative or favorite as-

See POLISCI on next page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

On the need to stay focused

The Saipanpreneur Project

Creating economic success for the CNMI

By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com.

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

This message is not for everyone. It is strictly for the entrepreneurs.

When I speak in my column of the many opportunities that abound, or of the concept of following one's passion, or of the urgent need to establish a local entrepreneurship base, it's not because I don't see what's going on.

I am not naive to the issues. Yes, there are infrastructure issues. There are labor issues. There are Covenant issues. There are indigenous rights issues. In this little land of ours, it is easy to be overwhelmed by the many issues that face us. It is easy to be distracted, to lose focus.

However, the secret critical path to success through all the chaos and turmoil is to stay focused on what's important, and not to waste time in worry.

THE WORRY

You see, when it comes to worry, we tend to focus our attention in one or more of four directions. We worry about

1. Things that have already happened.
2. Things that we have no control over, that will likely never happen.
3. Things that are in the future, that we don't know if they will happen.
4. Things that are in the present, that we can do something about.

If we want the best use of our energies, it should be obvious that worrying over items 1 through 3 are a waste of time. It makes no sense to worry about a past we cannot change, events which may never happen, things we cannot control, or a future we cannot predict. So, let's focus on things we can do something about. Agreed?

THE WEEDING

Now, before we proceed, let's agree on a critical point: There is a sorting or weeding out process in effect in the CNMI. As unpleasant as it may be to accept, after all the chaos and turmoil has subsided, there will be some who make it through this weeding out, and some who will not. This applies to people as well as businesses. It may also be wise to accept that the business model we've come to know and love may be outdated. How, where and even why we do business as CNMI-entrepreneurs may need a bit of alteration in order to be functional in the new paradigm. This weeding out of the old may occur every step of the way in our journey, so be vigilant. However, to help us prosper, let's proceed with focusing on the things we can do something about.

STAY OR GO

The first thing you can do something about through all of this is whether you will stay or go. Whether local, guest worker, expat, nomad or tourist, you always have a choice. If some of the non-negotiables of your ideal lifestyle here on Saipan, Tinian or Rota have been violated (i.e. if the quality of your life has deteriorated past the point of no return), then it may be wise for you to leave. You'll be happier elsewhere. Similarly, if the business environment is such that you feel you cannot make it through, then it may be wise, too, to leave.

If, on the other hand, you still find the benefits and joys of living here worth hanging around for, then by all means choose to stay. (Remember, peace of mind, prosperity and happiness are not functions of power outage schedules.) Once you choose to stay, however, I suggest further that you choose to stay and not whine. Whining is worrying and kvetching (Yiddish for constant complaining) about "worry items" 1 through 3 above. Whining depresses others, disempowers you, and is not the best use of your energies.

CHOOSE AN ISSUE

OK. Now that you've chosen to stay and not whine, then choose an issue. If you can help the CNMI weather the storm in the area of education, then do it. If your niche is agriculture, tourism, politics, immigration, infrastructure, or whatever, find a cause and champion it (without whining) for the good of all. Ask yourself how can I improve the educational system in this environment? How can I improve the infrastructure in this environment? If you think it can't be done, then perhaps you're being weeded out.

Since my message is for the entrepreneurs, I suggest the issue YOU, as an entrepreneur, should focus on is how to build a business in this environment. Again, if you think it can't be done, then perhaps you're one of those being weeded out. Those who can come up with solutions will survive, those who can't hang, will fall. This is the key to not being overwhelmed. Don't take on all the issues. Focus on one that you have some passion for, purpose around, or the potential to affect.

ADAPT

If you choose to stay and focus on an issue, then know this: Regardless of what happens with the federalization of immigration, you are going to have to adapt. Regardless of what happens with the minimum wage, you are going to have to adapt. Regardless of what happens with each and every issue that faces us, adaptability is what will be required.

If you cannot find a way to adapt, then perhaps you are being weeded out. Remember, there is a void being created by the weeding and sorting. This void must and will be filled. It will be filled by those who can adapt, and by those who can see or create opportunity. The question is will it be filled by you or by someone else?

Here then, are some critical questions entrepreneurs should ask to stay focused, ahead of the curve and in a position to adapt and prosper when all is said and done:

- *What are the things about this situation I have control over?*
- *How can I adapt to this situation?*
- *How can I hang on until things improve?*
- *What, if anything, can I do to improve the situation?*

Notice we aren't asking *"Whose fault is this?" "Where's the government?" "Who can I sue?"* Yes, those questions may be important, but they are for others with a different focus. They are for the people who've decided to choose that as their issue. Remember, this is a message of adaptability for the entrepreneurs.

Adaptability is the ongoing, ever-changing response to the ongoing, ever-changing conditions that arise. Each twist in the road may require a different strategy. Each obstacle along the way may require a different adaptation, and may also serve to weed you out. But fear not, the three things that every person has in his/her arsenal of responses to these changes, are commitment, perseverance and faith. If you are committed to staying, then adaptation is what you should be focused on.

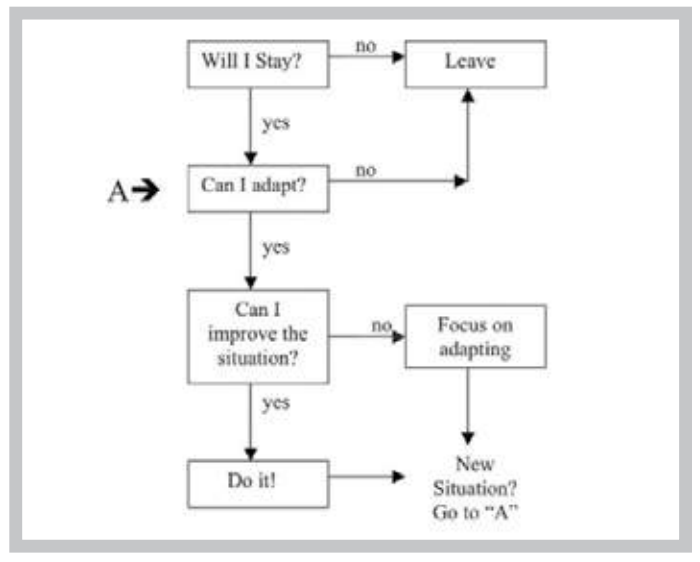
SUMMARY

There is a weeding out in process.

The face and form of business in the CNMI may be radically altered as a result. In the face of these changes:

1. Don't worry about things you cannot control, things in the past or uncertainties.
2. If you're going to stay, then choose to adapt.
3. If you can adapt, then focus next on what you can change.
4. If you cannot make change, then, for heaven's sake, at least don't whine!

Cut and paste this handy flow chart in easy view as a constant reminder.



Note: *For more tips on overcoming your fears, acting on your ideas, changing the game, and creating a passion-centered lifestyle, visit www.passionprofit.com!*

Note: *There's a new blog in town! Check out www.blacksonsaipan.com*

■ ■ ■ ■

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 12 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit*. Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt's philosophy and formula visit www.saipanpreneur.com and www.passionprofit.com.*

POLISCI

From Page 10

sociate. Respect and integrity can no longer be a matter of personal morals and virtues but of deep political honoring of everyone's political rights and responsibilities.

We laud the seemingly quixotic efforts of Tina Sablan and Ed Salas in pushing for unpopular measures such as extending accountability processes to the Legislature, and being proactive to our represented but non-voting residents among the contract workers. John Davis and Chong Won's tossing their berets to the local electoral process is a sign of maturity of the local scene. John Davis' listing of where he stands on issues as a candidate for the U.S. Delegate position is commendable. We await the others to do the same.

Current Economics courses divides content between the micro and macro levels. What has become evident is that the globalization of economic processes has become a done deal. The challenge is the strengthening the localization of the political process, so that federalization and other intermediate level of governance would not come as a threat but be an integral component of the political process.

We would do well if in our schools, we teach our STUCOs that politics is not about the art of strutting like a peacock into the podium, which is probably too late for the Youth Congress, but is about the function of service.

So, let us not be threatened by more expressions of opinions and perspective in all media. Let us not hesitate to attend any or all public meetings, nor refrain from having our voices heard, but more importantly, let there be a flowering of civil alliances, associations and aggregations, so that indeed, politics becomes truly of the people, by the people and for the people.

Letters to the Editor

Outages and sleepy children

I am speaking on behalf of most parents whose children attend the CNMI Public School System. The governor was right when he requested for classes to be delayed for another two weeks due to the power crisis. When the Board of Education insisted that classes will begin on Sept. 8, 2008, I believe the members only thought of the school hours during the daytime when they could accommodate our children.

What they forgot were the evening power outages, which are now 2-4 hours and most times two to three times a night. How could the board members expect students to go to school the next day knowing that these children haven't had enough sleep? They'll be restless and sleepy and the fault will fall on the students.

Our advice as parents is that we wait until full power is restored and then open the classes. The summer next year might be shorter but at least it's better than having them go to school early this year, during which, for every power outage, they will be pulled out from their classrooms because it's either dark or hot. And at night they don't get enough sleep because of these surprise power outages.

Emmy Rios
Tanapag, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms in the morning, then partly cloudy with isolated showers in the afternoon. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds around 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼77°	▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°

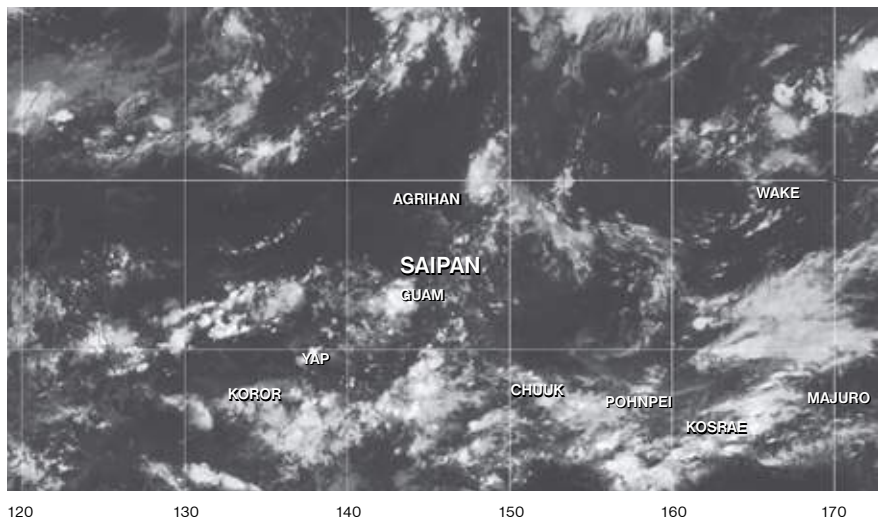
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼76
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼78
Yap	Cloudy	▲87	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼78
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼73
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲88	▼77
Majuro	Cloudy	▲86	▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲59	▼50
Beijing	Cloudy	▲84	▼64
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	▲89	▼79
Honolulu	Showers	▲85	▼76
London	Showers	▲66	▼51
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲86	▼62
Manila	Thundershowers	▲87	▼77
Melbourne	Sunny	▲58	▼46
Miami	Thundershowers	▲90	▼79
New York	Sunny	▲88	▼70
Osaka	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼74
Paris	Cloudy	▲64	▼49
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲78	▼69
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲85	▼62
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲76	▼48
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲79	▼57
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼59
Tokyo	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼75
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲93	▼69

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2008
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Westerly low-level convergence is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Japan within an area bounded by a line from 25N130E to 22N130E to 20N135E to 25N135E back to 25N130E. Trade-wind convergence is causing scattered shower and a few thunderstorms well west of the Marianas within 75 miles of a line extending northeastward from 11N130E to 13N138E and near Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae and parts of the Marshall Islands within an area bounded by a line from 7N152E to 1N157E to 3N180 to 5N180 to 7N167E back to 7N152E. A surface trough extends north-northeastward from 1N141E to 17N145E. Convergence near this trough is triggering scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms over Koror within and area bounded by a line from 7N133E to 3N140E to 5N141E to 8N138E back to 7N133E over parts of the Mariana Islands within an area bounded by a line from 4N140E to 10N140E to 20N154E to 22N149E to 14N145E back to 14N140E and between Yap and Chuuk within an area bounded by a line from 10N146E to 5N141E to 2N150E to 6N150E back to 10N146E. An area of scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms lies northwest of the Marshall's between 9n and 14n from 162e to 170e. An upper-level low center near 20N162E is largely responsible for scattered showers and a few thunderstorms north of wake island within and area bounded by a line from 25N171E to 22N160E to 20N168E to 25N175E back to 25N171E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

3:56AM Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet
9:50AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
4:02PM Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet
9:44PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:05AM	6:28 PM
Thursday	6:05AM	6:27 PM
Friday	6:05AM	6:26 PM
Saturday	6:05AM	6:26 PM
Sunday	6:05AM	6:25 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	8:43AM	8:35PM
Thursday	9:34AM	9:14PM
Friday	10:25AM	9:56PM
Saturday	11:18AM	10:41PM
Sunday	12:10PM	11:29PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	4:00am	4:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 099	5:00am	7:30am	Daily
NW 078	8:55am	2:00pm	Daily
NW 075	4:55pm	7:25pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:20pm	6:55pm	Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:55am	11:35am	Daily

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:50am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,5

Guam-Manila

CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7

Saipan-Guanzhou

CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:15am	2:50pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:30am+1	Daily
NW 100	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	9:00pm	1:30am+1	Daily

Seoul-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	4,7

Manila-Guam

CO 892	11:45am	8:25pm+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:20pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Saipan-Guanzhou

CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5

Rota-Guam

CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Sunday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $182. Off-island subscription rate is $376 per year. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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Letters to the Editor

Legislative cultural rot

The Legislative Branch? It's the most powerful in the CNMI's tri-government setup by virtue of its veto powers. It's also the core of our community's ongoing disasters. With the exception of current Governor Fitial, who enacted many beneficial laws in preparation to cure the evident damage done the first two years of his tenure by controlling both houses of the Legislature—in preparation to cure the evident damage done by all other elected officials before him—CNMI's previous governors came and went like so many bobbleheads, even if they meant well. How so? Even if a governor vetoes any bill passed by the houses, special interests demand an override by the good ol' boy network on the hill. And let's be honest about this stink on the hill—its primeval beginning lies inside their id: don't worry about real problems (like CUC), but lavish money (which our community doesn't have) on vote-getting projects (that we don't need). And what does this core of rot breed? New and naive electees who follow suit—other than newly elected Tina Sablan who is doing an incredible job attempting to expose this rot.

And this stink? It's euphemistically called "compromise" by Pete Reyes. Like that $4.7 million bill recently passed through intimidation (compromise) by the good ol' boy network of GOP guys (back in power with their BBQ philosophy). Result? The spore of two types that drive free cars and wear pretty ties and shirts up on the hill: the graybeards and the deadwoods. They're the ones who cluck and crow with bumper sticker promises, pose and preen for the cameras while doing zip, And gleefully cackle every day for the next two years of their term (or more), saying: "I've got $300,000 of free salape to blow!" For a group that's known more for churning out nearly 150 worthless bills, let's begin by defoliating the graybeards at the top.

Pete Reyes. He's sometimes referred to as the Senate president. Pete gives away $30,000 for new baseball fields, citing, "because roaming the streets invites criminality and drug use of our kids, I'll build more fields on Navy Hill whether you like it or not." He threatens. Tough guy. Abuse of power. And to demonstrate male dominance, Pete harangues newly elect congresswoman Tina Sablan for not voting for his two pet bills because he is "sadden"? How arrogant of him. Likewise Arnold Palacios over at the House, who said to Tina, "get on the train...." How arrogant of Arnold and Pete.

Sounds very familiar to that other graybeard, Stanley Torres, the very same guy who badgers others in the newspaper about their guilt, promises a lawsuit if the attorney general doesn't prosecute them, and then fails to go after the CNMI's Lt. Gov. Villagomez recently photographed in handcuffs. Because they're bosom buddies. And all from the same school.

Diego Benavente. He should hold the title of "most positions held on the hill." Diego labels Governor Fitial's recent executive order over CUC as a "conspiracy theory." The only "conspiracy theory" was his: as Lt. Governor three years ago, who was conspiring to be re-elected while not paying the fuel bills, not fixing the already broken engines (and the failed economy) and finally, lying to all of us that "our economy is pretty darn good"? Eating lunch? Nah, in all likelihood, fishing. Exactly, where another $25,000 of that $4.7 million will go so Diego, Heinz and a sludge of other legislative cronies and their pals, who splurge on expensive boats and suck up on expensive fuel so they can smile for the camera, have a grand old time, feeling good about themselves and the free trophies—all at our expense. And didn't the TTT guy Cruz claim that a brand new road was recently built to Diego's chicken coops under the guise of being a CIP project?

Paul Manglona. For all this time he's noted for playing it safe, obscuring rather than revealing, while acting like a benevolent patron and handing out freebies particularly for his island of Rota's scholarship monies. Great scheme to stay elected. Knows his game extremely well. And his favorite, the Retirement Fund. Now Paul's trying to push a 100 percent debt-free payout, claiming it would "save the government $2 million", not to benefit other hard working retirees who rightfully deserve the money, but for his soon near-retirement. Has he earned it after nearly 20 years in office? If you like a blank screen.

I need not defend our present Governor Fitial over the turmoil we're all experiencing today, for the following reasons: he is fearless. Stubborn. And his actions from day one of his term are just: to buy time, to get the community back on the road to recovery. And coherent: what he said he would do he is doing, despite the federalization takeover issue. He's the only governor who has stood up against political pressures to make the hard decisions and to finally do something to correct the massive ills created by past elected officials—in face of his unpopularity—such as declaring state of emergencies when the grave situations demanded, and not waiting for the graybeards and deadwoods to preen and pout and debate until our community is set adrift.

Can this legislative cultural rot be exorcized? Yes, with new and vibrant faces of similar beliefs and motivations to that of the newly elected congresswoman Tina Sablan. And her Open Government Act? The best tool that'll benefit all of us by exposing where all the wasted monies spent by her "colleagues' discretionary funds" went—if not cause for other investigations by the Feds.

Let's bring back former legislators like Junior Waki, Cinta Kaipat and Andrew Salas, to name a few. Let's get those doomsday writers of shrill voices like Propst, Arkle, Bennett, Cruz and Hodges—if they really got the guts—to walk the talk: pay the fee, get on the ballot for the upcoming election and do battle with those graybeards

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Pew's plans on NI monument

A cursory review of Section 806 of the Covenant Agreement addresses the acquisition of additional real estate in the CNMI by the federal government. The law states in part:

"If the United States must acquire any interest in real property not transferred to it under this Covenant, it will follow the policy of seeking to acquire only minimum area necessary to accomplish the public purpose for which the real property is required…."

It further states, "The United States may, upon prior written notice to the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands, acquire for public purposes in accordance with federal laws and procedures any interest in real property in the Northern Mariana Islands by purchase, lease, exchange, gift or otherwise under such terms and conditions as may be negotiated by the parties."

It also states, "No interest in real property will be acquired unless duly authorized by the Congress of the United States and appropriations are available therefore."

The solicitation of views established by President Bush, in my view, acknowledges the spirit and letter of Section 806 of the Covenant Agreement. Pew must respect this provision of law and the ancestral rights of the indigenous people in the disposition of what it rightfully owns under the umbrella of their rights to greater degree of self-government abundantly provided for under the Covenant.

We ask for nothing less. After all, the preservation of islands and surrounding waters up north are sufficiently protected under the CNMI Constitution. There's no need to pile up more than our share of federal impositions.

Candy B. Taman
Former member, CNMI House of Representatives
via e-mail

Politics or the people

The governor is really taking his politics to a new level by attacking the Washington rep for trying to help the people. A disaster declaration would surely solve many of our present and immediate problems and the worst is the President could say no. But I bet all the smart people know the President can't say yes either, unless we ask. Shame on the governor for not at least asking and trying to find some immediate relief for his people.

For once the governor was right in his assertion that the Washington rep was "politicking" with his desire for a disaster declaration for CUC. I guess the governor has been so out of touch that he forgot it was the Washington rep's job and it will also be the U. S. Delegate's job to help us with finding remedies to our problems, especially when the solution is in Washington and not on Capital Hill. The man does his job well and the governor tries to blast him but the gun backfired because *no one* will be against a disaster declaration. The governor has chosen his brand of politics to destroy the Washington rep over trying to help the people by sending a disaster declaration to Washington. I'm sure we can afford to fax a disaster declaration to Washington but it will be the Washington rep who will be the "point man" for the CNMI and the governor can't let him get that kind of credit—so we are forced to cope for politics.

But I'm sure most voting citizens know the governor does not agree with the Washington rep on letting the Feds help us. The governor has chosen to force us to cope with the crisis for his own political stance against the feds. I have nothing against Mr. Muña but for him to brag about how the people can cope with the power problem was very disturbing and heartless. Being tough is one thing but being foolish is not acceptable and we would indeed be foolish not to try for federal disaster assistance. I'm sure it was obvious to people with common sense that Mr. Muña was covering for the governor and his political plan to destroy the Washington rep's chances for being elected to Congress, even though he is the only one speaking up to find help for the people, which says a lot about who the people need to elect.

I would like to ask Mr. Muña that if our power situation is not in a state of disaster then what do you call it when we barely have enough money to purchase fuel? What do you call it when we have gone from six generators down to one and don't know when or how they are going to be fixed? What do you call it when the power rates are raised beyond the ability of the average citizen to pay without making enormous sacrifices for their family? What do you call it when the quality of life and business is at an all-time low from no power? What is it when people don't have water because there is no power? What do you call it when thousands of pounds of meat have already gone bad for many people and the outages are getting even longer, making it harder for our freezers to even keep meat frozen? Just what is a disaster for the people, Mr. Muña? I'm sure people with common sense don't agree with your assessment, nor do they appreciate your contempt for them.

The Governor said he had a plan for CUC and I'm sure we can count on it being just like the plan for Better Times. The fact is, the governor is playing politics by putting a bad spin on the Washington rep's suggestion over helping the people. Everyone can see the Washington rep is doing his job and the governor doesn't like being upstaged and the proof is in the details. The people are surely going to judge the governor's pursuit of politics or help for the people and it will only cost the price of a phone call to get us some relief.

Ambrose M. Bennett
Kagman, Saipan

A couple of suggestions

Benigno Fitial, it's time for you to come out of hiding and address the public about CUC. Your extended absence is inexcusable. I've seen and heard enough from Charles Reyes. No offense Charles, you do a great job with the press. And I'd like to add that you smokescreen like a pro. It must be taxing on you to be the administration's backbone. It is Benigno and Tim—no one else—who should address the public during these Broke Times.

Benigno, it is your job to address the public during these trying times. This is one of many reasons you get paid. And let me remind you that you are an employee of the CNMI. You report to every taxpaying citizen of the CNMI. The CNMI collectively is your boss.

Benigno, your job performance as Governor thus far is dreadful. You've failed the CNMI. Well, so did your predecessor. Enough is enough! Quit clowning around. How I wish there was a quick and easy way to serve you and Tim your walking papers.

So, let's say you were given a second chance to redeem yourself. Everyone deserves a second chance right. Well, for starters, this is what I'd like for you to do:

1. Apologize for your extended absence.
2. Have frequent press and radio conferences to discuss hot issues such as CUC and its challenges and progress. And don't send Charles Reyes—give the man some time for his wounds to heal from the blows he's been taking on your behalf.
3. Follow the power outage schedule.
4. Be transparent and engaging to the CNMI (your employer and immediate boss).
5. Trim the size of government (addition by subtraction).
6. Reassess your priorities. The CNMI's core industry (tourism) should be moved up to priority No. 1, of course assuming the CUC, CPA, CDA, CHC debacles have been reversed. Forget about pie in the sky industries like garments, sneakers or peanuts. I doubt Nike will be knocking on our doors anytime soon begging us to make their Air Jordan's here in the CNMI.
7. Demand that Tim Villagomez resign his post and return every penny of salary he's earned as your Lieutenant Governor.
8. And lastly, resign as our Governor.

Babauta and Benavente and all previous administrations, don't think you didn't contribute to the debacle that is plaguing the CNMI today. You all had equal hand in breaking the CNMI's back. Shame on you! Please oblige us by retiring from politics. Let the younger generation take over. If you couldn't fix CUC then, what makes you think you can fix it this time around? Fool us once, shame on you; fool us twice, shame on us. Thanks for nothing!

Philip Leyland
Navy Hill, Saipan

A call to action

I do not have to rehash how bad life has gotten on Saipan. You live it just as I do each and every day. I am sure you feel as bitter and hopeless as most of us do. Many of us have thrown our hands in the air and have given up on believing we can do anything about our current CNMI crises.

Chances are, while things are pretty bad for all of us, we must also think about the suffering being endured by the many families we do not see on a daily basis. It has been said that one-fourth of island residents no longer have electricity. If these and other residents were cut off the grid because they couldn't afford their utility bill, how far off are you and I? If Aggreko lives up to its promises and restores 24-hour power, it will be a welcome relief. The question is, if our power bills are already outrageous, what will they look like once we finally have 24-hour power via Aggreko?

The truth of the matter is, Aggreko is yet another band-aid solution by Governor Fitial. CUC executive director Tony Muña has assured us all that we will not see any rate increases, because they will be able to produce more power, which will mean more revenue. The one important factor that Tony forgot to include was the fact that in order for CUC to produce more power, they will have to purchase more fuel from Mobil. As it stands now, CUC has received millions in federal and local assistance, yet they still are unable to pay their current vendors, PMIC and Telesource. They needed a loan just to pay their vendors! So what will happen when Aggreko needs to be paid over half a million dollars every single month? (The $500,000 monthly payment to Aggreko does not include fuel as well as other associated costs) We will have to pay for it. Sometime in the very near future, Mr. Muña will come out with a rate increase and will try to justify it on the increasing cost of world oil. But you and I will know the truth, and once again, we will have to look at cutting more costs. Perhaps we will put less food on the table. Perhaps we will take our children out of private schools and put them into the already overcrowded PSS classrooms. Perhaps we will be forced to move. Surely, something will have to give.

We have been thrust into an endless nightmare, and we all want to desperately wake up from it. But we can't. My question to you is, how much more are you willing to take?

Some critics have claimed that none of us in our community have offered viable solutions. My friend, viable solutions have been given to the governor and to our leaders, and yet, they continue to go unanswered. I am not talking about long-term solutions and I am not talking about nuclear power. I am talking about immediate solutions to our problems.

Washington Rep. Pete A. Tenorio suggested that Governor Fitial declare the CNMI a "humanitarian disaster" so that we can receive federal aid and intervention from President Bush. How did Governor Fitial respond? "I am already addressing the problem and I have plans but Pete doesn't have one." If Governor Fitial's "plan" was to destroy the CNMI's economy and CUC, then mission accomplished.

Governor Fitial is ultimately to blame here. Why? Because we would not be in this situation if he never sole-sourced out the rehabilitation and repair contracts for CUC's failing engines to DCM and CISCO in the first place. The fact that Governor Fitial chooses to sue the federal government rather than to ask for their assistance is incomprehensible. We must all realize that federal assistance is our best immediate solution to our dreadful problems.

With each passing week, more businesses close, and more people leave our islands. How soon before you leave? How soon before you and your spouse, or parents, or children leave? We have a choice here and now. Do we continue to suffer silently, or do we speak unanimously and demand Governor Fitial seek federal assistance? The governor is supposed to govern our people. So far, he has not governed us. He has misled us and misinformed us, and in his infinite arrogance, he continues to defy any solutions offered by our community. We, the people, are the ones in charge of the CNMI. We have the right to elect a governor, and we have the right to remove him as well. Yes, I know you do not want to get involved. Let someone else speak for you; let someone else protest for you. The truth is, we cannot afford to sit by any longer. Your job should be the least of your concerns. Chances are, you are no different than me. You are tired, angry, bitter, confused, and hurt. But the one thing that we cannot give up is our hope for a better CNMI. If we lose hope and we lose faith in charting the CNMI on to a better course, then all is lost. We can make a difference, and we can change things. But you must be willing to play a part.

I can assure you, 1,000 brave citizens gathering on Capital Hill will make more than just local news. It will make national news! Let our voices be heard. Let us show the world that we have the courage to gather and make things right.

We have been given the opportunity to govern our islands, and federalization will not strip away those inherent rights. The miserable lives we live today were not caused by the millions of dollars we received in federal assistance from the United States. Our problems stem from leaders unwilling to do what is right and what is best for all of us. Life is all about choices. Do we continue to suffer, or do we something about it? I have called on 1,000 brave citizens to stand up and be counted. My question to you is, are you willing to be one of them? Are you willing to show all of our leaders that we are tired of sitting in the dark fanning ourselves and our children? Are you willing to show our leaders that we are fed up with their unwillingness to call for federal intervention? Are you willing to show our leaders that we have lost faith in their ability to lead? I am ready and willing to stand in front of the CNMI Legislature and the Governor's Office in a symbolic display of unity. It no longer matters where we come from, what party we belong to, what religion we embrace, or what leader we are related to. What matters is that we come together to show our leaders that we are extremely displeased by their inaction and their inability to find real solutions to our problems at hand.

I have never asked to be a leader, and I do not consider myself one. I am just an average citizen who is fed up with an ineffective, inefficient administration that chooses to sue the United States rather than to negotiate or plead for their assistance. The federal government is willing to help, but they must be invited to the table and not sued. Rep. Ralph Torres was assured that the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers is ready to step in and help with CUC. But nothing can be done if Governor Fitial continues to fight the federal government. Let us not forget that we are Americans. And as Americans, it is up to us to stand up and fight for what is right. It is a core value of being an American. The anti-American rhetoric must end once and for all.

I am pleading with you to respond to me and tell me you are willing to stand up against corruption and incompetence. If you are willing, please e-mail me so that I will know I have your support. I can assure you, 1,000 brave citizens gathering on Capital Hill will make more than just local news. It will make national news! Let our voices be heard. Let us show the world that we have the courage to gather and make things right. This is not a violent protest. This is a peaceful gathering that is more symbolic than anything. Do you honestly believe that 1,000 brave citizens will do nothing to stir our leaders into a frenzy? Into action? Into actually doing something? I promise you, it can and will make a difference. We are citizens and voters, and the real power truly lies in our hands. It is high time our leaders realize this.

I would like to conclude this with a powerful quote from one of the world's most influential leaders of all time, President Abraham Lincoln: "Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed."

Thank you for your time and please e-mail me at edpropst@gmail.com if you are willing to be a part of making CNMI history.

Ed Propst
Dandan, Saipan

Human being, Part 2

I thought I was wrong in my convictions when I publicly expressed my sympathy to my fellow utility workers who had been forced to stop working due to the legislations that prohibited them from working at CUC. More than 10 years of continued service and dedication to maintain the effectiveness and efficiency of power generators that supplies power to the island, only to find out a day or two later that they were jobless, without regard for what they've been through for the past 10 years of lifting heavy and oily engine parts, sweating in hot temperature, absorbing noise above the maximum average level per workplace at 85 dB emanating from a huge engine a few meters apart and working between running engines. These are in addition to the potential energy within pressurized pipelines attached to an energized engine that poses a danger (if mishandled) of killing workers should there be an explosion.

If a local law prohibited them from continuing their services with CUC, therefore the problem is not with CUC management alone. The existing laws played a vital role in our power crisis nowadays and the ones who passed them could be deemed as the mastermind of engine breakdowns and power failures if indeed the CUC problem arose from the legislative orders prohibiting alien workers from working at CUC beyond Sept. 30, 2007. Those alien workers are now among the hundreds or thousands of displaced foreign workers in the island seeking for employment.

CUC officials have pronounced that the manpower shortage at the power plant has affected staff morale to the point of exhaustion and I for one, affirm that exhaustion (be it human or machine) could trigger an unintentional mistake and unavoidable neglect to the point that the engine might be in a very serious condition leading to an eventual breakdown.

Rain or shine or even if we are about to sleep, about to eat or rest, if we are called to attend to a troubled engine, we could not say no due to our social and mandatory obligations to maintain effectiveness and efficiency in the plant operation. We expose ourselves daily to extremely dangerous and hazardous workplaces and yet they treat us like commodities that expire whenever they want to. Some of our friends thought that we are way above any other technical people in terms of salary on the island because we are employed in a dangerous and highly technical engineering job. I am sorry to say that that is just gossip…and untrue. What is true is that maintaining an exhausted engine and over-fatigued personnel (due to overwork) could trigger mistakes and may cause explosion (as they say it in the report) anytime in any power plant operation. That makes us very, very vulnerable in an accident that could hurt or even kill a utility worker but this will likely not happen in a well-maintained, well-managed facility that is manned by a highly trained technical and dedicated staff.

Now, once again, the law has been amended to allow CUC to hire alien workers to address the severe manpower shortage at its power generation division. Is it humane to re-hire alien workers (again) to fix the troubled engine and after two years, they will find themselves jobless again come 2010? According to the news report dated Aug. 19, 2008, "CUC workers suffer from low morale—the action of terminating the services of nonresident staff did not do any good for CUC or Saipan's consumers." I understand that the lawmakers are just doing their job to protect the interest of the local workforce but did they do it right at CUC? Who makes us suffer now from the frequent power outages? Is it the displaced alien workers at CUC? Is it the management running the utility or is it the lawmakers who made the law that prohibited alien workers from working at CUC?

The law on primary job preference (Section 4521 of P.L. 15-108) states that: "Citizens and permanent residents shall be given a primary preference for employment in the Commonwealth. This requirement underlies all regulations with respect to the hiring, renewal, replacement, and termination of employees. An important part of the implementation of the primary job preference is emphasis on jobs and occupations for which citizens and permanent residents are or can be qualified and which should be attractive to them. A Jobs Study by the Office of Public Auditor in 2006 and 2007 provided useful observations and conclusions in these regards."

I've said it before and I will say it again: "can be qualified" is not acceptable in any a highly technical industry. This preference cannot be applied in a power generation industry. There should be a clause preference referring to these rules. "Attractive to them" but lacking of training and exposure to the job is also unacceptable. If this primary job preference is the basis for not renewing alien workers from their employment at CUC, no wonder we are suffering now from severe power outage.

"Section 4434(e)(i) of the Nonresidents Workers Act states that "the director of labor shall not approve nonresident workers certificates for specific job classifications" but the utility workers are excluded in that specific job classification and even then those specific job classification were already declared unconstitutional.

With all due respect, I am appealing to the lawmakers in behalf of the alien workers at CUC to provide them the needed parts and equipments for a reliable power service in the future because we, as power plant workers, believe that those engines at Lower Base could be repaired back to its plate-load capacity ratings. A power generations specialist in the island once said, "You can only retire a diesel engine only in obsolency," meaning no more replacements parts are available.

Carlito J. Marquez
Puerto Rico, Saipan

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and deadwoods like Congresswoman Tina Sablan is waging in the halls of the Legislature. Even the Aussie hat guy Jack Angello, school teacher John Davis, talk show host John Gonzales and Korean Chong Won. Vote them into office, what's to lose? Anything's better than most of the legislators we have now and their bubble-wrap laws. Then dump or better yet—jail—those graybeards and the deadwoods who'll get caught. And watch what happens.

Lee Andersen
Chalan Kanoa, Saipan

Business

Google takes aim at Microsoft with new Internet browser

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Google Inc. is releasing its own Web browser in a long-anticipated move aimed at countering the dominance of Microsoft Corp.'s Internet Explorer and ensuring easy access to its market-leading search engine.

The Mountain View-based company took the unusual step of announcing its latest product on the Labor Day holiday after it prematurely sent out a comic book drawn up to herald the new browser's arrival.

The free browser, called "Chrome," is supposed to be available for downloading Tuesday in more than 100 countries for computers running on Microsoft's Windows operating system. Google said it's still working on versions compatible with Apple Inc.'s Mac computer and the Linux operating system.

Google's browser is expected to hit the market a week after Microsoft's unveiling of a test version of its latest browser update, Internet Explorer 8. The tweaks include more tools for Web surfers to cloak their online preferences, creating a shield that could make it more difficult for Google and other marketing networks to figure out which ads are most likely to appeal to which individuals.

Although Google is using a cartoonish approach to promote Chrome, the new browser underscores the gravity of Google's rivalry with Microsoft, whose Internet Explorer is used by about 75 percent of Web surfers.

Google's lead in the lucrative Internet search market is nearly as commanding, with its engine processing nearly two-thirds of the Web's queries.

For the past few years, Google has been trying to take advantage of its search engine's popularity to loosen Microsoft's grip on how most people interact with personal computers.

The assault so far has been focused on a bundle of computer programs, including word processing and spreadsheet applications, that Google offers as an alternative to one of Microsoft's biggest money makers, its Office suite of products.

Google has tried to make its alternatives more appealing and accessible by hosting them for free over Internet connections instead of requiring users to pay a licensing fee to install them on individual computers, as Microsoft typically does.

Meanwhile, Microsoft has tried to thwart Google by investing billions in the development of its own search engine and making an unsuccessful attempt to buy Yahoo Inc. for $47.5 billion.

The tensions between Microsoft and Google now seem likely to escalate with Google's foray into Web browsing.

Until now, Google had been trying to undermine Internet Explorer by supporting Firefox, a Web browser developed by the open-source Mozilla Foundation. Bolstered by an advertising partnership with Google's search engine, Firefox ranks as the second most popular browser, with a market share of more than 10 percent.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

$5 million in ads promote unionizing legislation

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP)—A labor advocacy group will begin airing $5 million worth of ads Monday on national cable and in targeted states to press for legislation that would allow workers to organize without secret ballot elections. The ads, to launch on Labor Day by American Rights at Work, do not name either presidential candidate, but the message of economic hardship dovetails with Democratic nominee Barack Obama's campaign themes. The national ads will appear on CNN, MSNBC and CNN Headline News. The ads also will appear in states with vulnerable Republican senators—New Hampshire, Maine, Alaska, Minnesota and Oregon. The ads, expected to air at least four weeks, urge viewers to call the senators to demand their support for the legislation.

Sale of Dresdner Bank to cost thousands of jobs

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP)—Commerzbank's purchase of German rival Dresdner Bank AG will cost thousands of jobs, but analysts said Monday it will benefit insurer Allianz SE, which agreed to sell Dresdner over the weekend in a 9.8 billion euros ($14.44 billion) deal. Shareholders appeared to agree, sending the Munich-based insurer's shares slightly higher in Frankfurt trading on Monday to 114.42 euros ($168.60), or up 0.28 percent. Commerzbank shares suffered because many analysts were concerned about the boldness of such a major purchase in a German economic environment where growth has contracted and business and consumer confidence are at multiyear lows. Shares of Commerzbank, Germany's second-biggest bank, slid more than 11 percent to 17.71 euros ($25.89).

Gustav depletes airlines' Labor Day business

ATLANTA (AP)—By disrupting travel to and from the Gulf Coast, Hurricane Gustav denied the airline industry some critical revenue over the Labor Day holiday weekend.

Gustav was also expected to nick tourism, insurers and utilities. Although quantifying losses in these sectors—and the region's energy infrastructure—will be difficult until the storm that made U.S. landfall Monday blows over, early indications suggest the impact wasn't nearly as bad as after Hurricane Katrina, which struck three years ago.

Some Gulf Coast retailers and construction companies are even likely to see a moderate boost in business.

"After a hurricane, when government aid flows dramatically, it tends to have actually a positive impact on economic growth, because now we're spending huge amounts of money to rebuild, shore up, in ways that never would have been spent had we not had a hurricane," Joel Naroff, president of Naroff Economic Advisors in Holland, Pa., said.

Some observers were breathing a sigh of relief that the storm weakened as it came ashore in south Louisiana, avoiding a direct hit on flood-prone New Orleans and boosting hope that the city would avoid catastrophic flooding.

But the weather was severe enough to force the cancellation Monday of more than 135 flights to and from airports in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

"It will be a big hit to the airlines for September," said AirTran Airways spokesman Tad Hutcheson. "It's usually a tough month. The only bright spot is the Labor Day weekend. Those pretty much were full flights we've had to cancel."

AirTran canceled 23 flights Monday due to the storm, while Delta Air Lines canceled 21, Continental Airlines canceled 28 and Southwest Airlines canceled 65. AirTran said it planned to resume service to Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport on Tuesday.

It was unclear when flights would be able to resume to Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. AirTran and Southwest hoped to resume service to and from New Orleans on Wednesday, but they said that would depend upon the availability of staffing and security personnel, as well as other issues.

Oil down sharply as Gustav seen weakening

By PABLO GORONDI
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

Oil prices tumbled to $111 a barrel Monday as Hurricane Gustav weakened along the Gulf Coast and posed less of a threat to oil drilling and refining operations.

A stronger dollar also helped send oil lower after crude gained nearly $3 to trade above $118 a barrel in anticipation of Gustav's hitting Louisiana. Light, sweet crude for October delivery was down $4.34 at $111.12 in late afternoon electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. On Friday, the contract fell 13 cents to settle at $115.46 a barrel.

In London, October Brent crude was down $4.32 at $109.73 a barrel on the ICE Futures exchange. U.S. trading was closed Monday for Labor Day.

Meanwhile, the average U.S. retail gasoline price was down slightly to $3.686 a gallon, the auto club AAA, the Oil Price Information Service and Wright Express reported Monday. The price rose slightly more than a penny Saturday. Gasoline prices peaked on July 17 at $4.114 a gallon.

It was feared last week that pump prices would soar because of the hurricane; however after edging higher at week's end, they appeared to be steadying on Monday.

Before Gustav reached the Gulf Coast, investors were concerned about heavy damage that would disrupt oil operations. Some analysts, however, said the market's response to Gustav was not as strong as some predicted. U.S. energy risk management firm Cameron Hanover described reaction as "extremely subdued."

"The best reasons we can give for that are the strength of the U.S. dollar, the continuing decline in consumer demand and the market's recent trend lower," a Cameron Hanover report said. "The reaction is telling us that this market just does not have the stomach it once did for higher prices."

Current crude supplies in the United States were "ample due to higher imports from the North Sea," said analysts at JBC Energy in Vienna, Austria, another possible reason for the lack of a lasting rally in oil prices.

Shrinking packages, pricier foods fluster parents

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Kids may be worried about homework, teachers and that pesky bully this school year. But parents? They're leery about lunches.

With food prices rising and packages shrinking, parents are wondering how they'll stretch their food budgets. Children are going to get an unwitting lesson in economics, analysts say, as parents change their food-buying habits to keep costs down.

Some kids will eat more hot lunches this year. Some will carry baggies full of snacks like home-packed chips and crackers rather than prepackaged ones. Maybe there will be more peanut butter, if it hasn't been banned in school because of allergies, instead of lunch meats, or cheaper items like Spam.

This year's lunchroom will be less about convenience and more about the bottom line, said Marcia Mogelonsky, senior research analyst with Mintel International in Chicago. Parents will be shopping for deals but still wanting all the basics—fruits, veggies, proteins and fun things like chips and cookies. It won't be easy, she said.

"Parents are sort of entering this with trepidation," she said. "It's not how much it costs. It's how much more it costs relative to what they're used to spending."

AP

Jordana Bischoff, 12, shows off her school lunch that she prepared at her home in Los Altos, Calif., Monday, Aug. 25, 2008.

The costs for key ingredients—like corn, wheat, soybeans and other items—are high and eating into food companies' profits. So big names like Kraft Foods Inc., Sara Lee Corp. and Hormel Foods Corp. are passing along price increases as they try to keep making money.

Some companies are also shrinking products or getting rid of certain lines to lower their costs. Skippy peanut butter, made by Unilever, now sells in 16.3 ounce jars that look the same size as the previous 18 ounce jars because of a larger indentation at the bottom. Kraft is reducing the number and in some cases the size, of items in its Deli Selects cheese line, for example. Sara Lee has reduced the size of some of its Hillshire Farm deli meat packages from 10 ounces to 9 ounces. The prices, for the most part, don't go down.

Some stores—like grocery store chain Save-A-Lot—are advising parents on what to buy. The chain, which targets bargain shoppers, has a new campaign telling parents how to make meals like turkey slices wrapped in tortillas that cost about a $1 a serving.

In Los Altos, Calif., Hollis Bischoff's two children have been packing their own lunches for years. It saves money because they know what they'll eat, she said, and it teaches them a lesson in how to spend and save. Jordana, 12, and Nate, 14, have never bought milk because they think it's too expensive at school, she said, and they ask teachers if they can use the microwaves in their lounges when they want hot food.

Nation

Gustav only sideswipes New Orleans as levees hold

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—A weaker-than-expected Gustav swirled into the fishing villages and oil-and-gas towns of Louisiana's Cajun country Monday, delivering only a glancing blow to New Orleans that did little more than send water sloshing harmlessly over its rebuilt floodwalls.

It was the first test of New Orleans' new and improved levees, which are still being rebuilt three years after Hurricane Katrina. And it was a powerful demonstration of how federal, state and local officials learned some of the painful lessons of the catastrophic 2005 storm that killed 1,600 people.

The storm that crashed ashore as a Category 2 hurricane had by late Monday been downgraded to a tropical storm with maximum sustained winds of 60 mph.

"They made a much bigger deal out of it, bigger than it needed to be," 31-year-old security worker Gabriel Knight said in New Orleans' nearly empty French Quarter. "I was here with Katrina. That was a nightmare. This was nothing."

There was growing optimism that New Orleans would soon reopen for business. Mayor Ray Nagin cautioned that Tuesday would be too early for residents to return to a city largely in the dark, but their homecoming was "only days away, not weeks."

"I was hoping that this would happen, that we would be able to stand before America, before everyone, and say that we had some success with the levee system. I feel really good about it," Nagin said.

A mandatory evacuation order and curfew remained in effect, and nearly 80,000 remained without power after the storm damaged transmission lines that snapped like rubber bands in the wind and knocked 35 substations out of service.

The city's sewer system is damaged, and hospitals were working with skeleton crews on backup power. Drinking water continued to flow in the city and the pumps that keep it dry never shut down—two critical service failings that contributed to Katrina's toll.

AP

A television crew tapes by the Industrial Canal flood wall after Hurricane Gustav came through the area, Monday, Sept. 1, 2008, in New Orleans.

Crews will comb the city Tuesday to fully review the damage, Nagin said, with the goal of having residents return later in the week. Buses are in place and ready to bring people back, he said.

"I would not do a thing differently," Nagin said. "I'd probably call Gustav, instead of the mother of all storms, maybe the mother-in-law or the ugly sister of all storms."

The sense of relief did not mean the state came through the storm unscathed. A levee in the southeastern part of Louisiana was in danger of collapse, and officials scrambled to fortify it. Roofs were torn from homes, trees toppled and roads flooded. A ferry sunk. More than 1 million homes were without power. And the extent of any damage to the oil and gas industry was unclear.

But the biggest fear—that the levees surrounding the saucer-shaped city of New Orleans would break—hadn't been realized.

Wind-driven water sloshed over the top of the Industrial Canal's floodwall—the same structure that broke with disastrous consequences during Katrina—and several Ninth Ward streets close by were flooded with ankle- to knee-deep water. Still, city officials and the Army Corps of Engineers expressed confidence the levees were holding.

Lawyers: Gonzales mishandled classified data

WASHINGTON (AP)—Former Attorney General Alberto Gonzales mishandled highly classified notes about a secret counterterror program, but not on purpose, according to a memo by his legal team.

The memo, obtained by The Associated Press, acknowledges that Gonzales improperly stored notes about the program and might have taken them home at one point.

Removing secret documents from specially secured rooms violates government policy.

Gonzales' lawyers wrote in their memo that there is no evidence the security breach resulted in secret information being viewed or otherwise exposed to anyone who was not authorized.

The classified notes focus on a March 2004 meeting with congressional leaders about a national security program that was about to expire. Efforts to renew the program sparked an intense Bush administration debate that played out at the hospital bedside of then-Attorney General John Ashcroft.

The memo was prepared by Gonzales' legal team as a response to a report being finalized by the Justice Department's inspector general. The report, which could be released as early as Tuesday, is expected to criticize Gonzales' handling of sensitive compartmentalized information, or SCI, according to the memo.

Gonzales agrees with inspector general's findings that his handling of notes and other SCI documents "was not consistent with the department's regulations governing the proper storage and handling of information classified as SCI," concluded the legal team's memo. "Judge Gonzales regrets this lapse."

Sensitive compartmentalized information is one of the highest and most sensitive levels of classified documents and is deemed top secret. It usually relates to national security cases.

Gonzales' lawyers acknowledge that he kept the notes in a safe in his fifth-floor office at the Justice Department, along with a small number of other highly classified papers, instead of in the special facilities accessible only by certain people with top secret security clearances.

He also may have taken the notes home at one point in 2005 as he was moving out of the White House counsel's office, where he served until he was sworn in as attorney general at the start of President Bush's second term, the memo says.

The inspector general's report will be the latest in a series taking Gonzales to task for his management of the Justice Department. He resigned under fire in September 2007.

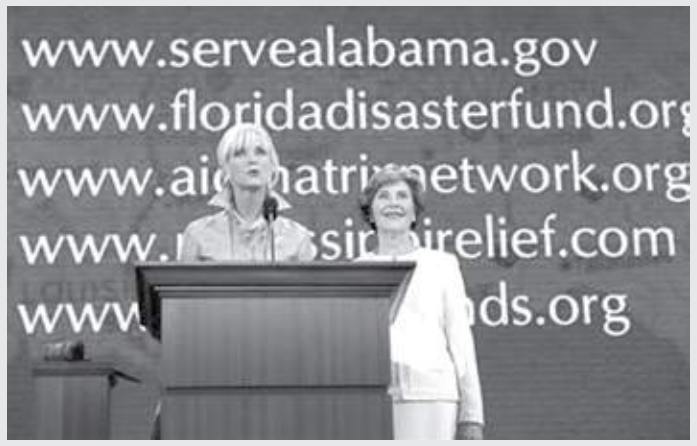
GOP *convention opens with appeal for Gustav aid*

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP)—Republicans, determined to propel John McCain to the White House, opened their storm-shortened national convention on Monday amid distractions involving running mate Sarah Palin. Police made more than 250 arrests in the surrounding streets as anti-war protests turned violent.

Delegates had scarcely settled into their seats when it was disclosed a lawyer had been hired to represent the Alaska governor in an investigation of her firing of the state's public safety commissioner. The other disclosure was personal, not political—the pregnancy of her 17-year-old unmarried daughter.

The convention's opening session was abbreviated as Hurricane Gustav hit the Gulf Coast, sparing New Orleans the type of damage inflicted by Hurricane Katrina almost exactly three years ago.

President Bush skipped his planned speech to go to disaster and relief centers, determined to avoid a repeat of the mismanagement of Katrina.



AP

Cindy McCain, wife of Republican presidential candidate Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., left, speaks as first lady Laura Bush listens during the opening session of the Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minn., Monday, Sept. 1, 2008.

McCain was in Waterville, Ohio, where he helped pack supplies to be sent to the Gulf.

Both men's wives sparked cheers when they appeared before the delegates, shunning politics to urge contributions to help storm victims.

Virtually the only political business of the convention's 2 1/2-hour session was approval of a platform that sidestepped the Iraq War, one of the key issues in the campaign between McCain and Democrat Barack Obama.

"The waging of war—and the achieving of peace—should never be micromanaged in a party platform. ... In dealing with present conflicts or future crises, our next president must preserve all options," it said.

Outside the Xcel Center was a reminder of the passions the war stirs. Protesters smashed windows, punctured car tires and threw bottles, and there were reports that delegates from Connecticut were attacked as they stepped off their bus to attend the day's convention session.

The main anti-war march was peaceful, police said, estimating about 10,000 people participated. But after the anti-war marchers had dispersed, police requested and got 150 Minnesota National Guard soldiers to help control splinter groups near downtown. Police used pepper spray to disperse demonstrators. Authorities reported making at least 250 arrests, including 119 people who faced possible felony charges.

The convention was less than 15 minutes old when Mike Duncan, chairman of the Republican National Committee, asked delegates to use their cell phones to text a five-digit code that would make a donation to the Red Cross for victims of the hurricane.

Emergency officials credit Gustav evacuation

WASHINGTON (AP)—Federal emergency management officials expressed cautious optimism Monday that preparation efforts for Hurricane Gustav helped avert the casualties seen in Hurricane Katrina three years ago.

Officials credited a successful evacuation and shelter system in citing a different outcome from Katrina's 1,600 casualties, but acknowledged that full damage assessments were yet to be made.

Aircraft that were grounded due to high winds were to begin flying over stricken areas later Monday to make the first evaluations of the extent of the destruction.

It's "much too early" to declare success, said Maj. Gen. Don Riley, deputy commanding general of the Army Corps of Engineers. "We would not be pounding our chests."

Authorities reported eight deaths related to Gustav, which made landfall in Louisiana as a Category 2 storm, a weaker-than-expected strength. At a news conference here, officials said they also were investigating three deaths among the more than 9,000 ill and elderly patients evacuated.

Gas prices could spike because of the storm. The Energy Department reported that a dozen refineries are shut down, representing 28 percent of the Gulf Coast capacity and approximately 12 percent of U.S. refining capacity.

Another 10 refineries are operating at reduced levels.

Workers from 86 out of 171 oil rigs in the Gulf have been evacuated, and about 96 percent of oil production and 82 percent of natural gas production in the region has been temporarily shut down. If found undamaged, drilling platforms could be back in operation quickly, officials said.

About 17 percent of electric customers in Louisiana were without power, although the percentage could rise.

Although the New Orleans levees appeared sound, Houma, Morgan City and areas of Lafourche Parish in southern Louisiana were cited as places facing danger, and officials said they remained cautious.

Asia

AP

Thai pro-government protestors wield a sling and a knife against anti-government demonstrators near the Government House, in Bangkok early morning Tuesday Sept 2, 2008.

Thai premier declares emergency in capital

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)—The prime minister declared a state of emergency Tuesday in Bangkok to restore order after overnight clashes between government opponents and supporters left one person dead and 43 injured.

Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej called it the "softest means available" to end the violence. But the order gave sweeping powers to the military, banned all public gatherings of more than five people and barred the media from reporting news that "causes panic."

Samak gave no timeframe for how long the decree would stay in effect but said it would be over "moderately quickly."

"I did it to solve the problems of the country," Samak said in a televised news conference at a military headquarters in Bangkok. "Because the situation turned out this way, I had no other choice."

The overnight violence heightened a national crisis that started a week ago when opponents of Samak occupied the grounds of his office and refused to move until he resigned.

Shortly after Samak spoke, a new crisis confronted his government. The Election Commission recommended that his People's Power Party be disbanded for electoral fraud committed during December elections.

Japan PM resigns to avoid 'political vacuum'

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's chronically unpopular prime minister abruptly resigned Monday after a yearlong struggle with a deadlocked parliament, leaving the weakened ruling party to grapple with a stalled economy and rising calls for snap elections.

Fukuda

The resignation of Yasuo Fukuda, 72, deepened a two-year stretch of political instability at the helm of the world's second-largest economy. It came only days after the government announced a stimulus package to counter flagging consumer spending.

Fukuda, who took office just under a year ago, said he was clearing the decks for a more popular successor to take over ahead of a tough special session in the parliament, where the ruling party controls the lower house and the opposition dominates the upper.

"We still have time before discussion of key policies starts in the upcoming parliamentary session, and this is the perfect timing not to cause people too much trouble," Fukuda said, explaining that he was exiting to avoid a "political vacuum."

Pakistan claims victory in militant stronghold

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan's army claimed Monday to have routed Taliban militants in a stronghold near the Afghan border but turned up no sign of Osama bin Laden or al-Qaida No. 2 Ayman al-Zawahri.

The government ordered a halt to the operation to allow some of the 300,000 families who fled airstrikes and combat in the Bajur region to return home for the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

However, officials reported that troops fired on militants seen moving toward a security post late Monday, and that stray mortar shells killed at least two civilians.

5 Afghan children are killed in raids

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Foreign and Afghan forces accidentally killed five children in two separate operations Monday, further undermining President Hamid Karzai after he demanded a halt to attacks in civilian areas.

Afghan officials have accused forces from the U.S. and other countries of killing dozens of civilians in recent weeks. The deaths have inflamed tensions across the country and weakened public support for both Karzai's government and a continued foreign troop presence in Afghanistan.

NATO said it accidentally killed three children in an artillery strike in the east on Monday after insurgents attacked its troops in the area. One artillery round slammed into a house in the Gayan district of Paktika province.

World

Anbar now under Iraqis

BAGHDAD (AP)—American forces on Monday handed over security responsibility to the Iraqis in a province that the U.S. once feared was lost—a sign of the stunning reversal of fortunes since local Sunnis turned against al-Qaida in Iraq.

But a Sunni Arab leader criticized the Shiite-led government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki for failing to embrace its newfound allies, underlining the threat that sectarian tensions still pose to a lasting peace.

Nevertheless, the transfer of Anbar province, the cradle of the Sunni insurgency and the birthplace of al-Qaida in Iraq, marked a dramatic milestone in America's plan to eventually hand over all 18 provinces to Iraqi control so U.S. troops can go home.

The 25,000 American troops remaining in Anbar will focus on training Iraq's military and police forces and standing by to help if the Iraqis are unable to cope with any surge in violence.

The ceremony was held under tight security in the center of Ramadi, the provincial capital where American troops fought ferocious battles with al-Qaida and other Sunni insurgents until the tide turned in 2007.

"This war is not quite over, but it's being won and primarily by the people of Anbar. Al-Qaida has not been entirely defeated in Anbar, but their end is near and they know it," Marine Maj. Gen. John Kelly, the senior U.S. commander in Anbar, said during the handover ceremony.

President Bush hailed the handover as a major achievement, saying the once-violent province had been "transformed and reclaimed by the Iraqi people."

"Iraqi forces will now take the lead in security operations in Anbar, with American troops moving into an overwatch role," Bush said in a statement. "This achievement is a credit to the courage of our troops, the Iraqi security forces, and the brave tribes and other civilians from Anbar who worked alongside them."

Anbar became the 11th province to revert to Iraqi security control, but it is the most significant because it borders Baghdad. The others have been in the peaceful Kurdish north or in the heavily Shiite south, which has proven less difficult for the Shiite-led government to control.

Anbar, a predominantly Sunni Arab expanse stretching from the western edge of the capital to the borders of Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, was long center stage of the war and a springboard for attacks inside Baghdad.

EU leaders warn Russia over partnership talks

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP)—European Union leaders warned Russia on Monday that talks on a wide-ranging political and economic agreement would be postponed unless Russian troops pull back from positions in Georgia.

The threat to delay talks set for this month on the "partnership and cooperation agreement" with Russia came after Britain and eastern European nations held out for a tougher line. But Europe's dependence on Russian oil and natural gas deterred stronger sanctions.

"I think we found an excellent compromise (by) not going back to business as usual, but still making clear that we want to maintain contact with Russia," said German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

At a four-hour meeting, the leaders ordered EU bureaucrats to study alternative energy sources to reverse growing dependence on Russia, which supplies a third of the EU's oil and 40 percent of its natural gas.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy said he plans to travel to Moscow next Monday for talks with the Russian leadership. A cease-fire he brokered to end fighting between Russian and Georgia calls for forces to be withdrawn to their positions before the war.

The Bush administration welcomed the EU's move.

"This extraordinary EU summit demonstrates that Europe and the United States are united in standing firm behind Georgia's territorial integrity, sovereignty and reconstruction," White House press secretary Dana Perino said in a statement.

Earlier, Russia warned the West against supporting Georgia's leadership, suggesting that the United States delivered weapons as well as aid to the former Soviet republic and calling for an arms embargo until the Georgian government falls.

Judge seeks info on Franco victims

MADRID, Spain (AP)—A judge began gathering information Monday about people who disappeared during Spain's civil war and subsequent dictatorship, seeking to produce a reliable list of victims slain away from the battlefield during the vicious fight between left and right.

Judge Baltasar Garzon issued a ruling seeking information from church leaders, city mayors and other authorities about victims of Gen. Francisco Franco's forces after his military uprising on July 17, 1936, touched off the war against the left-wing, democratically elected Republican government.

Atrocities were committed on both sides, although the general's victorious fascists are generally considered to have committed the lion's share.

Franco decreed that anyone who opposed him could face execution, but there is no official record of how many people were killed by his supporters during and after the war. A historian said Franco's government lists 55,000 people executed or murdered by Republican sympathizers.

The 1936-39 war itself killed an estimated half million combatants in what became a proxy fight between Adolf Hitler's Germany and Benito Mussolini's Italy backing Franco and communist forces, including the Soviet Union, which supported Republican forces.

Students flock to Jordan to study in tamer Mideast

AMMAN, Jordan (AP)—Young Americans studying Arabic like to joke that Jordan is "Middle East Lite"—a safe way into a tumultuous region without Lebanon's violence, Syria's tense relationship with the U.S. or the Gulf's conservative culture.

Drawn by that reputation, an increasing number of Americans interested in Arabic have been flocking to Jordan.

The capital, Amman, lacks much of the history and color that attract Americans to Cairo, the most popular destination for foreign students who want to learn Arabic. But Amman comes without the air pollution and crowds that plague Egypt's capital. It also feels more Western with its clean streets and numerous American shops and fast-food restaurants.

"I've traveled to Morocco but not to the heart of the Middle East, and Jordan was that good entry point," said Liza Hester, an Arabic student from Maine's Colby College.

She speculated that places like Egypt and Yemen would be more difficult to navigate and said her college would not give her credit for Arabic classes taken in countries on the U.S. State Department's travel advisory list, such as Syria and Lebanon.

Jordan, perhaps best known as home of the ancient red rock city of Petra, has generally been safe for foreigners despite an occasional flare-up in violence.

Campus Life

Colleges confront shootings with survival training

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Hundreds of colleges across the nation have purchased a training program that teaches professors and students not to take campus threats lying down but to fight back with any "improvised weapon," from a backpack to a laptop computer.

The program—which includes a video showing a gunman opening fire in a packed classroom—urges them to be ready to respond to a shooter by taking advantage of the inherent strength in numbers.

It reflects a new response at colleges and universities where grisly memories of the campus shootings at Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois University are still fresh.

"Look at your environment through the lens of survival," said Domenick Brouillette, who administered the course at Metropolitan Community College, which serves more than 20,000 students. "Survivors prepare themselves both mentally and emotionally to do what it takes. It might involve life-threatening risk. You may do something you never thought you were capable of doing."

Nearly 300 professors at Metropolitan Community College were shown the video as part of a training exercise before the first day of classes on this downtown campus. The training, produced by the Center for Personal Protection and Safety, a for-profit firm based in Spokane, Wash., is also available for the school's students.

The training drills teachers and students in a "survival mindset," said Randy Spivey, a former U.S. Department of Defense hostage negotiator who is executive director of the center. The center's roster includes retired FBI agents and others with federal law enforcement experience.

Hundreds of colleges across the nation have purchased a training program that teaches professors and students not to take campus threats lying down but to fight back with any "improvised weapon," from a backpack to a laptop computer.

"There are two extremes. On the one hand is paranoia, and on the other is oblivion," he said. "We're just trying to get people to keep this on their radar."

The training discourages cowering in a corner or huddling together in fear, Brouillette emphasized at the Kansas City session.

Instead, Metropolitan Community College faculty members were taught to be aware of their surroundings and to think of common classroom objects—such as laptops and backpacks—as "improvised weapons."

The program has been bought by nearly 500 colleges, which tailor the company's safety messages—laid out in instructional videos and other training guides—to craft localized violence prevention programs. Spivey expects that by year's end that number will have grown to about 1,000 schools.

Schools may provide the training to students as well as staff, as at Metropolitan, or limit it to instructors or security personnel.

Campus safety experts interviewed by The Associated Press said they are not aware of any similar survival training courses marketed specifically to college campuses.

"It's a dark subject," Brouillette said. "But we can't say 'It's never going to happen again.' It's 'When is it going to happen?' And we have to be prepared to survive that."

The sort of aggressive survival response cited by Brouillette troubles school violence researcher Loren Coleman, a retired University of Southern Maine professor.

Showing students violent images of school shootings could trigger post-traumatic stress or other reactions that resident advisers, graduate assistants and similarly untrained workers would be unequipped to handle, Coleman said.

And the techniques shown in instructional videos such as "Shots Fired" could provide inspiration for troubled students considering their own acts of violence, Coleman suggested.

"You more or less are giving them a blueprint for how to avoid law enforcement," he said.

BY THE NUMBERS

Back to school

Editor's note: The following data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error.

Summertime winding down and summer vacations coming to an end signal that back-to-school time is near. It's a time that many children eagerly anticipate—catching up with old friends, making new ones and settling into a new daily routine. Parents and children alike scan the newspapers and Web sites looking for sales to shop for a multitude of school supplies and the latest clothing fads and essentials. This edition of By the Numbers highlights the many statistics associated with the return to classrooms by our nation's students and teachers.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SHOPPING

$7.5 billion: The amount of money spent at family clothing stores in August 2007. Only in November and December—the holiday shopping season—were sales significantly higher. Similarly, sales at bookstores in August 2007 totaled $2.3 billion, an amount approached in 2007 only by sales in January and December.

For back-to-school shopping, choices of retail establishments abound: In 2005, there were 24,659 family clothing stores, 6,305 children and infants clothing stores, 26,416 shoe stores, 9,501 office supply and stationery stores, 23,195 sporting goods stores, 11,077 bookstores and 9,589 department stores.

STUDENTS

75.2 million: The number of children and adults enrolled in school throughout the country in October 2006—from nursery school to college.

PRE-K THROUGH 12 ENROLLMENT

56 percent: Percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in school in October 2006.

72 percent: Percentage of children 3 to 6 enrolled in kindergarten who attended all day, as of October 2006.

56 million: The projected number of students to be enrolled in the nation's elementary through high schools (grades K-12) this fall.

17,000: Number of students 30 and older enrolled in elementary school, as of October 2006.

11 percent: Projected percentage of elementary through high school students enrolled in private schools this fall.

41 percent: Percentage of elementary through high school students who were minorities, as of October 2006.

23 percent: Percentage of elementary through high school students who have at least one foreign-born parent in October 2006. Five percent were foreign-born themselves.

33 percent: Percentage of children 6 to 11 who participated in lessons as of 2004. Lessons include those taken after school or on the weekend in subjects such as music, dance, language, computers or religion. The corresponding percentage a decade earlier was 24 percent.

26 percent: Percentage of children 6 to 11 who had ever attended or been enrolled in first grade or higher and had changed schools at some point as of 2004, down from 30 percent a decade earlier. For children 12 to 17, the corresponding rate declined from 52 percent to 42 percent over the period.

7 percent: The percentage of children 6 to 11 who had ever repeated a grade as of 2004, unchanged from a decade earlier. For children 12 to 17, the rate declined from 16 percent to 11 percent over the period.

LANGUAGES

10.9 million: Number of school-age children (5 to 17) who speak a language other than English at home; 7.8 million of these children speak Spanish at home.

LUNCHTIME

30.5 million: Average number of children participating each month in the national school lunch program in 2007.

9.3 billion: The nation's total apple production, in pounds, in 2007, down from 9.9 billion in 2006. The chances are good that the apples your children present to their teachers or enjoy for lunch were grown in Washington state, which accounted for more than half of the nation's total production.

COLLEGE

18.4 million: The projected number of students enrolled in the nation's colleges and universities this fall. This is up from 13.5 million 20 years ago.

37 percent: Percentage of all college students 25 and older in October 2006; 55 percent of these older students attended school part time.

69 percent: Percentage of undergraduates enrolled in four-year colleges in October 2006. Of those enrolled in such schools, 80 percent attended full time.

46 percent: Percentage of 18- and 19-year-olds enrolled in college in 2006.

56 percent: Percentage of undergraduates who were women in October 2006.

8.6 million: Number of people who hold bachelor's degrees in business. Twenty-five percent of bachelor's degrees were in this field.

5.6 years: Average amount of time it takes people to complete bachelor's degrees. It took 4.4 years to complete an associate's degree.

HOW MANY SCHOOLS?

97,382: Number of public schools in 2005-06. The corresponding number of private schools was 28,996 in 2005-06.

4,276: Number of institutions of higher learning that granted college degrees in 2005.

3,690: The number of public charter schools nationwide in 2005-06. These schools, exempt from selected state and local rules and regulations, enrolled 1 million students.

TEACHERS AND OTHER SCHOOL PERSONNEL

7.1 million: Number of teachers in the United States in 2007. Some 2.9 million teach at the elementary and middle school level. The remainder includes those teaching at the postsecondary, secondary, and preschool and kindergarten levels.

$59,825: Average annual salary of public school teachers in California as of the 2005-2006 school year—the highest of any state. Teachers in South Dakota received the lowest pay—$34,709. The national average was $49,026. High school principals earned $92,965 annually in 2006-07.

$15.48: Average hourly wage for the nation's school bus drivers in 2006-07. Custodians earned $13.78, while cafeteria workers made $11.16.

TECHNOLOGY

14.2 million: Number of computers available for classroom use in the nation's schools as of the 2005-2006 school year. That works out to one computer for every four students.

THE RISING COST OF COLLEGE

$14,203: Average tuition, room and board (for in-state students) at the nation's four-year public colleges and universities for an entire academic year (2006-07). That is more than double the corresponding figure in 1990.

$38,400: Average tuition, room and board at the nation's four-year private colleges and universities for one academic year (2006-07). That also is more than double the corresponding 1990 figure.

THE REWARDS OF STAYING IN SCHOOL

$82,320: Average annual 2006 earnings of workers 18 and older with an advanced degree. This compares with $20,873 for those without a high school diploma. In addition, those with a bachelor's degree earned an average of $56,788 in 2006, while those with a high school diploma earned $31,071.

$59,408: Average starting salary offered to bachelor's degree candidates in petroleum engineering in 2007, among the highest of any field of study. At the other end of the spectrum were those majoring in the humanities, who were offered an average of $31,345.

$5,992: Average monthly earnings for full-time workers 18 and older with earnings who had a bachelor's degree in engineering.

$3,431: Average monthly earnings for full-time workers 18 and older with earnings who had a bachelor's degree in education.

GRADUATION

3.3 million: Projected number of high school diplomas that will be awarded in the 2008-09 school year.

3.1 million: Number of college degrees expected to be conferred in the 2008-09 school year.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

$9,138: The per-pupil expenditure on public elementary and secondary education nationally in 2006. New York ($14,884) spent the most among states or state equivalents, followed by New Jersey ($14,630) and the District of Columbia ($13,446). Utah ($5,437) spent the least per student, followed by Idaho ($6,440) and Arizona ($6,472).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Life & Style

'Potter' publisher looks to promote next big thing

NEW YORK (AP)—On Sept. 9, the U.S. publisher of "Harry Potter" will premiere a highly ambitious series with a mystery ending for readers and a couple of puzzlers for the industry: How big is the market for a multimedia story—and can a phenomenon be conceived by a publisher rather than created by the public?

"The 39 Clues" is a planned 10-volume set about young Amy and Dan Cahill and their worldwide search for the secret to their family's power. The first book, "The Maze of Bones," is written by Rick Riordan of "The Lightning Thief" fame and has an announced first printing of 500,000. Steven Spielberg has already acquired film rights to the series.

Designed for boys and girls ages 8 to 12, each book will have a different writer, including such best-sellers as Gordon Korman and Jude Watson. Backed by a multimillion-dollar marketing campaign, "The 39 Clues" also features game cards, a contest with a $10,000 first prize and a sophisticated Web site that includes games, blogs, videos and thousands of pages of background.

"The word we always used was 'groundbreaking,'" says Scholastic executive editorial director David Levithan. "We wanted to be the first out there to introduce this kind of multidimensional thing."

A Scholastic team, led by Levithan and including about a dozen editors, thought of the series about three years ago, working from the idea of a treasure hunt. The essential outline, including the ending, was set by the publisher. Authors were asked to fill in the details, taking a thread, as Levithan describes it, and turning it into a blanket.

"It's a different kind of challenge," Levithan says. "To use a movie analogy, each director of the 'Harry Potter' films brings their own voice and their own vision to what J.K. Rowling has done. You still feel there's a consistency there, and part of the fun is seeing what they add to it."

AP
In this photo released by Scholastic shows the cover of book two for "The 39 Clues."

Scholastic quickly decided that "The 39 Clues," its title an homage to Alfred Hitchcock's "The 39 Steps," would make an ideal multiplatform event. Readers might check out the Web site, just as kids who love online games might then turn to the books. A recent study by the American Library Association revealed that many librarians already use games to attract young people and, ideally, get them interested in books.

"I love the gaming aspect of 'The 39 Clues,'" says Jenny Levine, a digital specialist for the library association. "I could also see a lot of libraries forming '39 Clues' clubs the way they've had Pokemon clubs."

THREE WISE GUYS

Sandbags, dreaming of Kornheiser, PBJ, urinals

By JOE HEIM, JUSTIN RUDE and DAN ZAK
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

Hi, Guys: Every time there's a natural disaster involving water, in this country anyway, people appear on TV news programs frantically filling sandbags. Where does all this sand come from? For that matter, where do the bags come from? What happens when the water recedes? Is the sand recycled?—Sally

Justin: The sand that goes into the bags usually comes from local sand quarries and is often government-provided, along with the bags, in times of disaster. For those trying to buy their own, unfilled bags (usually burlap or polypropylene) are available from a number of manufacturers and are easy to order online. You can also order filled sandbags, but as you might imagine, delivery is pretty expensive.

Disposing of your sandbags is a little more complicated. Floodwater is pretty nasty stuff, so bags that came into contact with it need to be handled with care. Local government officials are usually good people to ask for help with that.

Joe: Sandbagging is clearly an area of expertise for us.

■■■

Dear Wise Guys: If your wife or girlfriend had a dream of having S-E-X with another man, would you rather she tell you or not? I feel guilty, and I want to know if I should tell my husband. The sad part is the stranger in my dream does not look like Brad Pitt or David Beckham—more like Tony Kornheiser! I've asked my husband if he's ever dreamed of having S-E-X with another woman, and he said, "No!"—Lisa

Joe: Why are you spelling out S-E-X? Is there a 3-year-old in the room? I don't know about telling your husband, but you should definitely tell Tony Kornheiser.

Dan: You can reach him by yelling at the TV.

Justin: No matter how secure a man is, he probably doesn't want to hear about his wife's sexy dreams about another man. Especially Tony K. Keep it to yourself, and don't feel guilty. Dreams are both weird and out of your control. My wife and I have a strict rule: We share only dreams that involve dinosaurs and sports heroics.

Joe: That sounds S-E-X-Y.

■■■

Dear Wise Guys: I work downtown, and I had a craving for a good peanut butter and jelly sandwich for lunch, maybe grilled? After looking online and in some of my favorite delis, no one seems to make one. Any suggestions?—Mike

Joe: I know a great place, Mike. It's called your kitchen. Bring it from home.

Dan: Potbelly Sandwich Works has a PB and J, ungrilled. As an alternative, find an elementary school and wander into the cafeteria. Make sure you wear a backpack. Keep your head down, buy a sandwich from the lunch lady and throw it onto your George Foreman grill when you get back to the office.

■■■

O Wise Ones: I work in a professional office building. It is very rare to have small children there. However, all of the men's bathrooms in the building (and in most office buildings I've been in) have one short urinal. These urinals are two feet or so below the normal ones and are very unpopular with the men of the office. The urinals are not shorter than an average toilet, so it seems as though someone who is too short to use a normal urinal could just use a stall. Why do office buildings have these short urinals?—Your No. 1 Fan

Joe: Thanks for asking this important question, No. 1 Fan. (Yes, we got the joke.) Here's the answer: A lot of guys use urinals while kneeling. It's a new trend that's catching on. I expect you'll be seeing more and more short urinals in your office bathroom travels.

Dan: I want to hear from our No. 2 fan!

■■■

Dear Wise Guys: Why don't homes have urinals? You would think homes would have a toilet for the ladies and a nice urinal for frequent use. Thoughts on this?—JT

Justin: Sorry, JT, we have a one-urinal-question-per-column rule.

■■■

This week's motto: Par for the Coarse (submitted by reader Howard Walderman, of Columbia, Md.)

Have a question only the Three Wise Guys can answer? Send it to wiseguys@washpost.com and await their words of wise-dom.

IN LOVING MEMORY

Henry E. Elayda

Born to Life: September 21, 1947 • Called to Eternal Rest: September 2, 2008

His memories will live in the heart of his wife & children:
Wife: Teresita Elayda
Children: Hernalyn Angeles & Nestor Angeles
Edmin Elayda & Analyn "cindy" Pabilona (Megan)
Brian Elayda & Maelyn S. Elayda
Henny Ann Elayda
Harlene Elayda
Honey Elayda

He will also be missed by numerous cousins, nieces, nephews, godchildren, Co-workers, and Friends.

Daily rosary are being offered at Elayda's Residence at Sablan Compound, San Antonio at 6:00 pm.

Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Thank You, Maraming Salamat Po!

In Loving Memory

†Carmen Wabol Nekaifes

Born to Life: November 1, 1942
Called to Eternal Rest: August 27, 2008

Her remains will be escorted from CHC Chapel on **Thursday, September 4, 2008 at 7:00 a.m.** to her residence at Garapan Beach Road for responso, holy rosary, and viewing. **Celebration of the Eucharist will be offered the same day at Kristo Rai Church at 3:00 p.m.** followed by interment of her final resting place at Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

We extend our sincerest humble gratitude to you all for your prayers and love.

From the Children & Families

AP

A May 19, 2008 file photo shows British actor Jude Law posing at "The Day After Peace" photo call during the 61st International film festival in Cannes, southern France.

Jude Law in Afghanistan to promote peace

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Jude Law is visiting Afghanistan to promote peace in the war-ravaged country.

Together with director Jeremy Gilley, the Oscar-nominated Law has returned to Afghanistan to help maintain momentum for Peace Day—an annual day on Sept. 21 urging a global ceasefire and nonviolence.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted Peace Day in 2001, following a lobbying campaign by Gilley which he documented in the film "Peace One Day."

"When I left Kabul last year, I was hugely moved not by the conflict that I have read so much about, but by the people's courage and the people's sense of hope," Law told reporters in Kabul on Monday.

"It seemed that they really want to make this day, the Peace Day, work. And they did," Law said. "People recognize the day, because they recognize that lives could be saved."

Noted for his roles in movies such as "The Talented Mr. Ripley" and "Cold Mountain," Law helped Gilley produce his second documentary film, called "The Day After Peace."

The documentary, which also features former U.N. chief Kofi Annan, the Dalai Lama, Angelina Jolie, Annie Lennox and Jonny Lee Miller, charts the way Peace Day can be used as a focus for lifesaving activity, Gilley said.

Law said the movie "was the most important film I have been part of."

Law and Gilley, who arrived in Kabul on Sunday, are to meet President Hamid Karzai, top NATO and U.N. officials, and members of the aid community.

Last year, they traveled and filmed in treacherous areas of eastern Afghanistan to help promote the day, on which they hope weapons will fall silent, allowing help to reach those most in need.

Gilley said in Afghanistan over 1.4 million children were able to be vaccinated against polio on Peace Day as a result.

"The world celebrates so many days that often separate and segregate us ... and yet there is none that ties us all together," Law said. He said ordinary Afghans, who marched and prayed as they marked Peace Day last year, are among the film's stars.

"It is Peace Day's commitment to take this film as a message from people of Afghanistan to the rest of the world," he said.

The visit coincides with one of Afghanistan's most violent periods since the ouster of the Taliban from power in 2001. More than 3,700 people—mostly militants—have died as a result of the war this year.

Law said that even as Kabul has become more dangerous, hope among its people has remained surprisingly high.

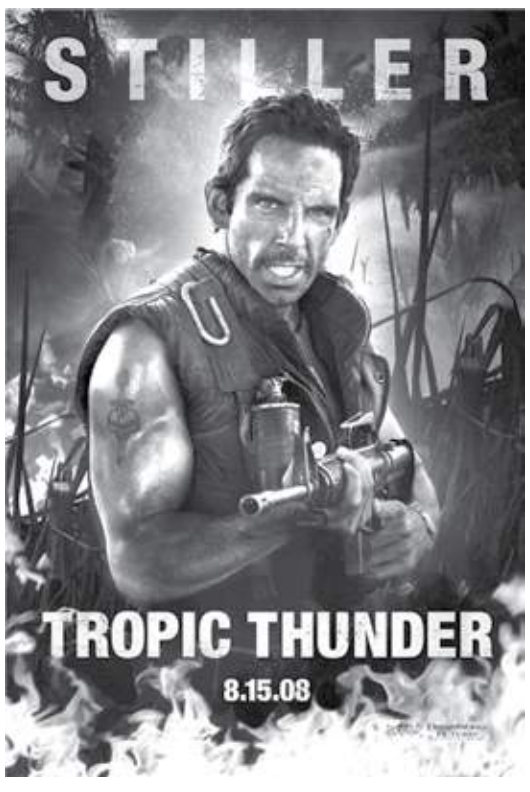
If "it is possible here, it is possible everywhere," Gilley said.

'Thunder' echoes at No. 1 with $14.3M for weekend

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Tropic Thunder" hauled in $14.3 million to stay on top of the box office as Hollywood's solid summer wound down sleepily, with Hurricane Gustav contributing to a slow Labor Day weekend at theaters.

The DreamWorks-Paramount comedy was the No. 1 flick for the third-straight weekend, raising its total to $86.6 million, according to studio estimates Monday.

1. "Tropic Thunder," $14.3 million.
2. "Babylon A.D.," $12 million.
3. "The Dark Knight," $11 million.
4. "The House Bunny," $10.2 million.
5. "Traitor," $10 million.
6. "Death Race," $8.2 million.
7. "Disaster Movie," $6.9 million.
8. "Mamma Mia!", $5.8 million.
9. "Pineapple Express," $4.5 million.
10. "Vicky Cristina Barcelona," $3.5 million.



Debuting at No. 2 with $12 million over the four-day weekend was 20th Century Fox's sci-fi thriller "Babylon A.D.", starring Vin Diesel as a mercenary smuggling a woman into New York City in a post-apocalyptic future.

With coastal Louisiana nearly deserted because of Gustav, Hollywood business was virtually nonexistent in that region.

"The theaters are closed. There is just no business at all down there," said Dan Fellman, head of distribution at Warner Bros., whose "The Dark Knight" was No. 3 with $11 million.

Gustav made a slow weekend even quieter. The top 12 movies pulled in $93.4 million, down 23 percent from the same weekend a year ago, when "Halloween" opened with $30.6 million.

Still, Hollywood finished a fraction ahead of 2007's record summer revenue. From the first weekend in May through Labor Day, business totaled $4.2 billion, up from $4.18 billion during summer 2007, according to box-office tracker Media By Numbers.

But accounting for higher ticket prices, attendance was down 3.5 percent.

"It's record revenue, but barely. Kind of an underwhelming end to a great summer," said Paul Dergarabedian, president of Media By Numbers.

Amid a rush of weak newcomers, "The Dark Knight" held up well, rising a notch from its fourth-place rank the previous weekend. The Batman sequel became the second movie in Hollywood history to top half a billion dollars domestically, climbing to $504.7 million, trailing only "Titanic" at $600.8 million.

Though "The Dark Knight" crossed the $500 million mark in record time of six weeks and three days—half the time it took "Titanic" to reach that level—the studio expects it to top out at about $530 million.

"Titanic" had a much slower climb up the charts but it maintained momentum, holding on to the No. 1 box-office slot for months.

Factoring in inflation, "The Dark Knight" lags far behind "Titanic" in terms of actual admissions. "The Dark Knight" would need to take in about $900 million to match the number of tickets sold by "Titanic."

Among other new movies, Overture Films' espionage thriller "Traitor," starring Don Cheadle, premiered at No. 5 with $10 million, while Lionsgate's spoof "Disaster Movie" debuted in seventh place with $6.9 million.

"Disaster Movie" was simply the latest in a rush of parody flicks, but coming three years after Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans and with Gustav arriving the same weekend, "it was just an unfortunate choice of title," Dergarabedian said.

"I don't think it really changed the box office for the movie," he said. "What `Disaster Movie' is is a spoof of big summer movies. I don't think it was destined to be a huge movie."

MGM's campus comedy "College" opened well outside the top 10 with $2.6 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Monday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Media By Numbers LLC. Final figures will be released Tuesday.

On a holiday, big news unfurled on TV sets

NEW YORK (AP)—A seat in front of the television—rather than a backyard barbecue—was the place to be on Labor Day with fast-breaking news stories about Hurricane Gustav and head-turning revelations about GOP vice presidential choice Sarah Palin.

Everyone expected a busy day as it dawned. Yet neither of Monday's two big stories unfolded as anticipated, giving the coverage more intrigue. "Make no mistake, it's been a wild day here," NBC's Brian Williams said, shortly after climbing a ladder on a levee to peer into New Orleans' Industrial Canal.

The consensus at the top of network evening news programs was that the hurricane spared New Orleans the brutal punch the city had feared. Gustav's broad expanse still tested news organizations trying to grasp the big picture while following developments community by community.

The Republican Party, at its national convention in St. Paul, Minn., had already set aside most of its opening night schedule because of the hurricane. The GOP bid to focus attention on hurricane relief was cast aside when John McCain's running mate revealed that her 17-year-old unmarried daughter was pregnant.

During one whiplash-inducing stretch late Monday afternoon, CNN anchor Wolf Blitzer switched from a report on Palin's daughter to a weakening levee in Lousiana's Plaquemines Parish, to Laura Bush's speech to convention delegates and back again to the levee.

Blitzer was anchoring CNN's hurricane coverage from the convention floor. John King's computer video board, usually used to call up mock electoral vote tallies, instead was showing aerial maps of Louisiana levees.

Williams, ABC's Charles Gibson and CBS' Katie Couric all anchored their evening newscasts from New Orleans. The broadcast networks had set aside one hour in prime time to follow opening night of the convention but quickly shifted to devote most of that time to the hurricane.

Gustav drew the extraordinary attention because of the damage done to New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The comparison was a constant theme; Al Roker even mistakenly called this year's hurricane "Katrina" while discussing the projected path on the "Today" show.

It was the typical breathless hurricane scenes on TV: correspondents trying to deliver information while barely being able to stand in high winds and stinging rain. They worked in areas that officials had been urging people for two days to evacuate.

At one point as they stood on a bridge, Fox News Channel's Geraldo Rivera and a camera crew spotted a man in the water in the Industrial Canal.

"There's a person in the water!" Rivera shouted.

"Oh, my God!" someone said off camera.

The camera focused on a man in a life jacket trying to secure a loosened tank that had been banging against the side of a boat. The camera watched as the man, securely tethered to a lifeline, was pulled back onto a boat with his job complete.

The Weather Channel, particularly hurricane expert Steve Lyons, spoke with a calm authority. There was a sense its meteorologists were delivering hurricane trivia from a lifetime of knowledge rather than some quick study.

On the convention floor, the networks carried speeches by Laura Bush and Cindy McCain urging delegates and viewers to donate money to hurricane victims. President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney were both scheduled to speak on the convention's first night—which some McCain loyalists weren't all that eager to see anyway—but they stayed away from St. Paul because of the storm.

MSNBC's Andrea Mitchell said the new schedule represented the GOP "trying to rebrand itself as a party that knows how to respond to a natural disaster." The Bush administration's perceived disorganization following Katrina sent the president's approval ratings spiraling, and they haven't recovered.

"It's quite an effort by the Republican convention to adapt to new circumstances," said MSNBC's Chris Matthews. "I've never seen this before, where a party has completely reworked its agenda to meet an immediate national need, in this case a hurricane."

Yet it was still overshadowed by the news about Palin's daughter. The Alaska governor has also hired a lawyer to represent her in an investigation over the firing of her public safety commissioner.

The networks' reporting on Palin's daughter was subdued. They covered Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama's statement that the news shouldn't be part of the campaign. The stories refrained from criticizing Palin's family, and Fox's Brit Hume said he talked to a prominent religious conservative who said many people he knew would appreciate that her daughter has decided to keep the baby.

"She's getting a free pass from all the delegates," said NBC News' Chuck Todd.

This Labor Day at least, Jerry Lewis had plenty of competition for attention.

This ain't no jive, particle physics rap is a hit

EAST LANSING, Mich. (AP)—Who says science doesn't turn people on? Kate McAlpine is a rising star on YouTube for her rap performance—about high-energy particle physics.

Her performance has drawn a half-million views so far on YouTube.

The 23-year-old Michigan State University graduate and science writer raps about the Large Hadron Collider, the groundbreaking particle accelerator that has been built in a 17-mile circular tunnel at the CERN laboratory near Geneva, Switzerland.

McAlpine raps that when the collider goes into operation on Sept. 10, "the things that it discovers will rock you in the head." The $3.8 billion machine will collide two beams of protons moving at close to the speed of light so scientists can see what particles appear in the resulting debris.

"Rap and physics are culturally miles apart," McAlpine, a science writer at CERN, wrote to the Lansing State Journal in an e-mail last week, "and I find it amusing to try and throw them together."

Others, including physicists, also find it amusing.

"We love the rap, and the science is spot on," said CERN spokesman James Gillies.

McAlpine received permission to film herself and friends dancing in the caverns and tunnels where the experiments will take place.

"I have to confess that I was skeptical when Katie said she wanted to do this, but when I saw her previous science rapping and the lyrics, I was convinced," Gillies said. "I think you'll find pretty close to unanimity among physicists that it's great."

McAlpine honed her physics rapping skills at Michigan State's National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory, where she was part of a student research program two years ago.

New Orleans celeb faction quiet as Gustav sputters

When Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans three years ago, celebrities reacted with a mix of grief, outrage and generosity. All-star telethons raised millions for storm victims, Kanye West and others derided the government's response—even Sean Penn went to the region to personally assist in rescue efforts.

Many celebrities who live in or hail from the area, from John Goodman to Brett Favre, took a deep and personal interest in helping relief efforts. Ellen DeGeneres, a New Orleans native whose elderly aunt, cousins and friends had their Gulf Coast homes destroyed, taped an episode of her show dedicated to the devastation.

With Hurricane Gustav only delivering a glancing blow to the region at Category 2 strength instead of the wallop that was predicated, it was still unclear Monday what the celebrity response would be in its wake. Though Gustav was still battering the area with rain and high winds on Monday night, there was no damage or deaths on the scale of Katrina.

Jerry Lewis' annual Labor Day telethon raised a record $65 million for the Muscular Dystrophy Association—but also made a pitch for those inconvenienced by Hurricane Gustav. This year's 22-hour telethon added a special plea for MDA-registered families forced to leave their homes because of the hurricane.

Efforts to reach stars from the area, such as rapper Lil Wayne, jazz star and actor Harry Connick Jr. and jazz great Wynton Marsalis—were unsuccessful on Monday, when most offices were closed due to the Labor Day holiday.

Representatives for Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt, who lived in New Orleans for about a year after Katrina struck, also did not return messages. The couple and their famously expanding brood stayed in the city while Pitt was filming "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" last and were active in raising funds and other projects to rebuild the city.

West famously chastised President Bush during a national telethon to raise funds after Katrina struck by saying, "George Bush doesn't care about black people."

AP

Jerry Lewis listens to the final tally of donations during the 43rd annual Muscular Dystrophy Association Labor Day Telethon a the South Point hotel-casino in Las Vegas, Nev. Monday, Sept. 1, 2008.

Lewis telethon raises record $65 million for MDA

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Jerry Lewis raised a record $65 million for the Muscular Dystrophy Association in his annual Labor Day telethon, a benefit that also made a pitch for those inconvenienced by Hurricane Gustav.

This year's 22-hour telethon added a special plea for MDA-registered families forced to leave their homes because of the hurricane, which made landfall Monday in Louisiana. The storm affected nearly 5,000 MDA families needing services in their new location, the organization said.

Lewis also urged viewers to contribute to the Salvation Army's emergency disaster services.

The 2008 haul for the 43rd annual fundraising blitz was $1.2 million more than last year's total.

Lewis said he was prepared not to exceed the 2007 number because of the sluggish economy.

"Each year I tell myself, 'This has got to be it. There's no way we can do better.' Then, the following year, I'm astounded to see that generosity driven by love and compassion has a greater capacity than I thought possible," Lewis said. "I am awed and humbled by this response."

Half-sisters win fight to direct Bayreuth Festival

AP

Eva Wagner-Pasquier, left, and Katharina Wagner, right, pose after a meeting of the Richard Wagner Foundation council in Bayreuth, Germany, Monday, Sept. 1, 2008.

BAYREUTH, Germany (AP)—The dramatic struggle played out backstage, pitting the great-grandchildren of composer Richard Wagner for control of the legendary festival dedicated to his music.

When the curtain rose Monday, half-sisters Katharina Wagner and Eva Wagner-Pasquier had been chosen to succeed their father, Wolfgang, at the helm of the Bayreuth Festival, bringing the verve of youth and steady hand of experience to an event legendary among opera connoisseurs.

The festival's board said Katharina Wagner and Eva Wagner-Pasquier would be co-directors of the annual extravaganza in Bavaria, after last week's end to their father's 57-year run as overseer of an event that began in 1876.

The 24-member board sided with the half-sisters over their cousin Nike Wagner, who mounted a surprise bid just a week ago with renowned Belgian director Gerard Mortier, after a power struggle that stretched on like a Wagnerian opera but more closely resembled Shakespeare's "King Lear."

"It was an extremely stressful time," Katharina said Monday.

Their 89-year-old father, Wolfgang Wagner, has led the festival since 1951, when he revived it after a World War II hiatus with his brother Wieland—Nike's father

Bride's mother is appalled by tacky wedding tradition

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: My daughter, who is being married in three months, mentioned to me that her fiance's friends have a tradition of covering the newlyweds' car with condoms. Whatever happened to tin cans and a "Just Married" sign?

I'm no prude, but I'm appalled at the tackiness of it. There will be grandmothers and children attending the wedding. My daughter agrees that it's poor taste, but doesn't think there is anything she can do about it. Should I stay out of it, or go clean off the car myself during the reception?

TEXAS BRIDAL MOM

DEAR BRIDAL MOM: Condoms on the car? Why, that's almost as much of a thigh-slapper as short-sheeting the bed in the honeymoon suite or trashing it entirely. Of course it's juvenile and in bad taste, but boys will be boys, and this is the element with whom your soon-to-be son-in-law associates. By the time your daughter goes to the car, she'll be a married woman. My advice is to stay out of it and let her fight her own battles.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My wife, "Kim," and I have been married three years and have 14-month-old twin daughters. We have a beautiful life together with one exception -- my father. He thinks he knows everything and isn't afraid to give his opinion. He also makes silly comments to the twins such as, "If your mommy doesn't treat you right, then you can come live with Grandpa."

Kim is an excellent wife and mother. She takes my father's comments personally, even though I tell her he's just being goofy. She bristles every time my parents come over for a visit. When they do, she leaves the room. She rolls her eyes and has flat-out told me she can't stand my father.

What can we do? I love my father and am extremely close to both my parents. This has caused several fights between Kim and me. I say it's no big deal, but she REALLY resents my father. What do you think?

PEACEMAKER IN COLORADO

DEAR PEACEMAKER: I wonder what your father may have said to your wife that has caused her to react to him so negatively. I recommend family counseling, and the sooner the better. The fact that Kim dislikes your overbearing father to the point that she can't be in the same room with him, and overreacts when he makes comments to the babies—which I agree are goofy—IS a "big deal."

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: When I was 23, single and living at home with a manipulative mother, I became pregnant and gave birth to a baby boy. At her urging and because I lacked self-confidence, I gave my son up for adoption. Several years later, I married and had two children who are now 29 and 33.

Recently I have been thinking about telling my children about their half-brother in a letter to be opened after my death. I have reservations about telling them at all, yet I feel they have a right to know. What is your advice?

MOTHER WITH A SECRET

DEAR MOTHER: I see no reason not to reveal your secret to your adult children. If you prefer to do so in a letter after your death, that's your privilege. However, they will have questions that you will no longer be around to answer. So when you write that letter, I strongly suggest that you give them all the information you can so they'll be able to start a search if they wish.

P.S. If your son should show up searching for you somewhere down the line, that way they won't be shocked, and they will be able to provide the answers their half-brother is looking for.

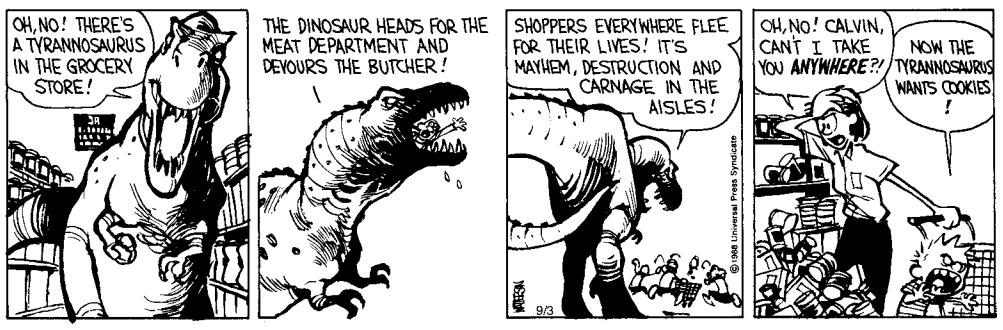
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


OH, NO! THERE'S A TYRANNOSAURUS IN THE GROCERY STORE!
THE DINOSAUR HEADS FOR THE MEAT DEPARTMENT AND DEVOURS THE BUTCHER!
SHOPPERS EVERYWHERE FLEE FOR THEIR LIVES! IT'S MAYHEM, DESTRUCTION AND CARNAGE IN THE AISLES!
OH, NO! CALVIN, CAN'T I TAKE YOU ANYWHERE?!
NOW THE TYRANNOSAURUS WANTS COOKIES!
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9/3

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

RING
MEOW!
THAT WAS LIZ. SHE WANTED TO TALK TO YOU, BUT I MEOWED HER OUT OF IT
JIM DAVIS 9-3
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www.garfield.com
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

REMEMBER, ADAM. YOU HAVE NO EXCUSES NOT BEING PRODUCTIVE NOW THAT THE KIDS ARE BACK IN SCHOOL.
THAT'S NOT ENTIRELY TRUE. IT CAN TAKE DAYS, EVEN WEEKS SOMETIMES, TO ADJUST BACK TO A PERIOD OF FEWER INTERRUPTIONS AND DISTRACTIONS.
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BRIAN BASSET
9/3

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

ENO, WAKE UP!
HUH?
I HAD A BAD DREAM. CAN I SLEEP IN YOUR BED?
YEAH. I GUESS SO.
GREAT. SO WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO SLEEP?
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www.gocomics.com

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

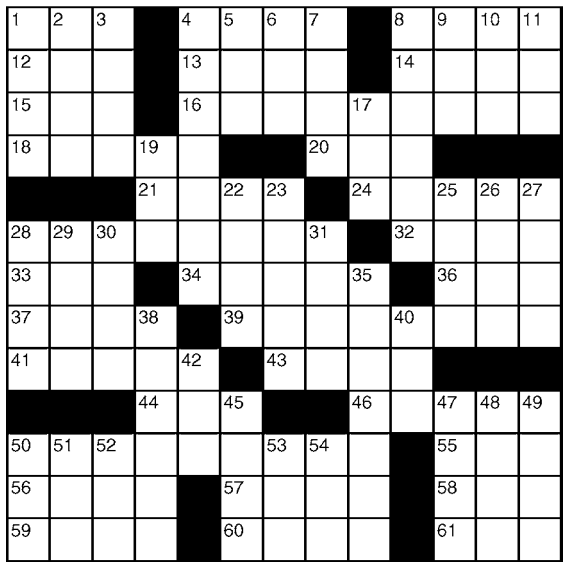
ACROSS
1 Telly watcher's choice
4 Seethe
8 Soother
12 Meadow
13 Therefore
14 Sills solo
15 Rowboat need
16 UV protection
18 Measure for Noah
20 "Chicago" lyricist
21 Mrs. Nick Charles
24 Squabble
28 Michael Jackson move
32 Raise up
33 $ dispenser
34 Footwear
36 Model Carol
37 Impale
39 Screened-in veranda
41 Esteem
43 Slay
44 Stitch
46 Rehab goings-on
50 Still brew
55 Atmosphere
56 "The King —"
57 Majesty preceder
58 "CSI" evidence
59 Arp's style
60 Long sandwiches
61 Firmament

DOWN
1 United nations
2 Sweetheart
3 Low- — diet
4 Gives
5 Tulsa sch.
6 Car starter (Abbr.)
7 Come in last
8 Sweeney Todd, e.g.
9 Exist
10 Whopper
11 Fellow
17 Couric's employer
19 B&B
22 Cheery sounds?
23 For all to hear
25 Rip
26 Supersoft mineral
27 Upright (Pref.)
28 TV show set in Korea
29 "Simpsons" bus driver
30 Mideast gulf
31 Gambling game
35 Arachnophobe's worry
38 Where to find Sarajevo
40 Inseparable
42 In medias —
45 Wherefores' mates
47 Small amounts
48 Sty cry
49 Picture of health?
50 Crazy
51 — shoestring
52 Peculiar
53 Chit
54 Gist

Solution time: 21 mins.

R	S	V	P	■	K	N	E	E	■	B	I	B
O	K	I	E	■	E	E	L	Y	■	A	D	O
B	I	N	G	O	G	A	M	E	■	N	E	W
■	■	■	L	U	S	T	■	L	E	G	A	L
S	A	B	E	R	■	■	L	E	M	A	■	■
P	L	U	G	■	S	P	A	T	U	L	A	S
E	O	N	■	J	E	A	N	S	■	O	D	E
D	E	G	A	U	L	L	E	■	A	R	I	A
■	■	A	N	N	A	■	■	A	N	E	N	T
F	A	L	S	E	■	I	A	G	O	■	■	■
I	T	O	■	B	O	N	G	O	D	R	U	M
V	O	W	■	U	R	G	E	■	E	U	R	O
E	M	S	■	G	E	E	S	■	S	E	N	T

Yesterday's answer 9-3



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kiran Desai, 37; Charlie Sheen, 43; Valerie Perrine, 65; Eileen Brennan, 76

Happy Birthday: Don't let anyone put one over on you. Take care of your own personal matters first so you can cater to your dependents or anyone else for that matter. Shake off anyone who is leaning on you so you can take advantage of some new possibilities within your reach. You will be much more effective in the lives of those you love if you achieve your own goals first. Your numbers are 4, 11, 22, 30, 39, 41

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): You should probably question a business or personal relationship you are in. It's time to request answers if you don't understand exactly what's going on and why the boundaries of a situation you are facing have changed. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Emotions will be skyrocketing and troubled waters will make you wonder how secure you are. Stick to what you know and don't take on too much to compensate or save someone else's neck. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Ignore comments made out of anger, jealousy or spite. Keep your head clear and your mind alert. Love is in a high cycle. If you put a little effort into your relationships, you will have fun and stabilize your situation. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You may feel like speaking out but, in your emotional state, you will probably say something you'll regret. Demands, ultimatums or pressuring others to do things your way will backfire. You won't win if you fight. ✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You can talk anyone into anything if you have your facts straight and your ideas ready to present. A trip, meetings or something you believe in will secure your position in a competitive market. A friend or experienced ally will help you. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Shyness will hold you back. Let everyone see what you can do. Advancement is in the stars, if you aren't afraid to present what you have to offer. Change is heading your way; prepare to jump at any opportunity. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Overreacting and causing a fuss before realizing the beneficial changes that are taking place will be your downfall. Relax, wait, and then comment, make alterations or back away. Time is on your side. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): You can rely on the old, experienced people watching over you to come to your rescue. Trust in the advice offered. Your reactions will reassure your supporters that you are still worth backing. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Falling for someone you meet through work or getting closer in a personal relationship you've already established will do you good and help to stabilize your life. Don't let someone's negativity hold you back or tamper with a decision you make. ✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Fuzzy thinking will result if you take on too much. Don't give away information that can jeopardize your expectations. Expect someone to take advantage of you if you don't protect your ideas. Caution is your best defense. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You have a good idea that will help your finances out, so stick to it and watch your money grow. Set up a budget that can help you out in business, even if it does restrict your playtime activities. Stay with it. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Don't leap when it is clear that too much could potentially go wrong. Someone with experience will teach you the ropes and help you make the right decision at the right time. You don't have to go it alone. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are charming, eloquent and can make a statement with appearance alone. You are opportunistic, aggressive and will always reach for your ultimate goal.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			8	7	4			
		8			6			
	7			2				
4				5				
8				3			7	9
3					9	2		6
	1							5
		9					3	
			5	6	3	4		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 9/03

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

8	6	2	9	4	3	7	1	5
5	4	1	7	8	2	9	6	3
7	3	9	1	5	6	8	2	4
3	1	6	8	7	5	4	9	2
2	9	5	6	1	4	3	8	7
4	7	8	2	3	9	1	5	6
1	2	3	5	9	7	6	4	8
6	8	7	4	2	1	5	3	9
9	5	4	3	6	8	2	7	1

Difficulty Level ★★ 9/02

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

CLEMENTINES **Solution: 7 letters**

S	C	D	Y	N	I	H	S	S	E	L	D	E	E	S
T	E	L	O	F	I	B	E	R	H	S	E	R	F	T
N	R	P	O	O	M	I	K	A	N	W	B	N	L	A
E	O	E	I	N	F	I	R	M	S	E	A	S	O	N
M	U	E	S	C	E	V	(D)	O	S	E	G	Q	W	G
G	N	L	O	S	E	D	(N)	R	N	T	S	O	E	E
E	D	E	F	S	E	R	(I)	A	U	N	R	E	R	R
S	T	D	T	V	O	D	(R)	S	U	G	A	R	I	I
O	H	S	L	V	C	R	A	T	E	S	K	I	N	N
C	E	A	A	S	E	E	R	T	O	R	A	N	G	E
C	H	L	P	T	H	I	A	M	I	N	Z	I	S	X
O	F	A	I	E	T	E	S	T	E	K	R	A	M	O
R	E	D	D	I	S	H	Y	C	I	U	J	P	A	T
O	E	S	O	P	A	C	K	A	G	E	D	S	L	I
M	A	N	D	A	R	I	N	E	T	A	M	I	L	C

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Aroma, Bags, Climate, Cloned, Crates, Dessert, Exotic, Fiber, Firm, Flavor, Flowering, Food, Fresh, Grow, Halved, Harvest, Juicy, Mandarin, Markets, Mediterranean, Mikan, Morocco, Nutrition, Orange, Packaged, Peeled, Recipes, Reddish, Rind, Round, Salads, Season, Seedless, Segments, Shape, Shiny, Skin, Small, Soft, Spain, Sugar, Sweet, Tangerine, Taste, Thiamin, Trees

Yesterday's Answer: Renowned

Treasury 5 Send check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 postage and handling each ($14.20 total each. U.S. funds only) for the first volume. $1.50 p&h for each additional volume. to Universal Press Syndicate, Attn: Wonderword, 4520 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free. 1-800-255-5734, ext. 6688. Order online at upuzzles.com.

CLASSIFIED ADS

WHATZIT Solution:
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LOST PASSPORT

Name : Xingbo Fang
D.O.B : Feb. 13, 1978
Passport No. : G09613486
Contact No. : 287-7792

Name: Daisy P. Matias
Address: P.O. Box 7676 SVRB
Saipan, MP 96950
Phone: (670) 287-9757

Pro Se,

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

DAISY P. MATIAS, Petitioner, vs. MICHAEL C. MATIAS, Respondent,) FCD-DI CIVIL ACTION NO. O8-0319) **SUMMONS**

TO: RESPONDENT, MICHAEL C. MATIAS

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is given to you herewith, within twenty (20) days after the service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to Daisy P. Matias, whose address is P.O. Box 7676 SVRB, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this Summons, judgment of default may be taken against you for the relief in the complaint.

Dated this 13th day of June, 2008.

/s/ Clerk of Courts

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, Plaintiff, -v- DOMONIQUE S. PALACIOS, and GLORIA S. PALACIOS, Defendants. : CIVIL ACTION NO. 06-330

NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on August 15, 2008, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot No. 011 G 735, situated in Kagman III, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 800 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 011 G 14, dated December 1, 1993, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 93-4182, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, September 26, 2008, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 18th day of February, 2008:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
P.O. BOX 501370 CK, SAIPAN, MP 96950
HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
PROMOTIONAL & OPEN COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT

It is the policy of the Board of Education, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, that the Public School Personnel System shall be applied and administered according to the principles of equal employment opportunity as defined by the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Public Law 6 - 10, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin. Applicants for this position must be a U.S. Citizen or be eligible and authorized to work in the U.S., including the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Announcement No: **PSS-072-2006 (Amendment/Re-Announcement IV)**
Application & Employment Type: **Non-Certified**
Position Title: **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**
Pay Level/Step: **UNGRADED** Per Annum Salary: **$50,000.00 - $ 65,000.00**
Opening Date: **August 20, 2008, 2008** Closing Date: **September 11, 2008**
Location: **PSS, OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION**
Benefits: Salary Commensurate with qualifications and experience, plus excellent benefits (including Life Insurance, Retirement Benefits, and Paid Leave/Holidays

Minimum Requirements:
Graduation from a US accredited college or university with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, Public Administration, Finance, Accounting or related field of study plus five (5) years work experience and must hold a valid licensure as a Certified Public Accountant; **OR** Master's Degree in Business Administration, Public Administration, Finance, Accounting or related field of study plus five (5) years related work experience.

***Detailed job description with qualification requirements can be obtained at PSS Human Resources Office at the 3rd Retirement Building, Capitol Hill, or download it online www.pss.cnmi.mp/humanresources**

Announcement No: **PSS-073-2006 (Amendment/Re-Announcement II)**
Application & Employment Type: **Non-Certified**
Position Title: **ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**
Pay Level/Step: **UNGRADED** Per Annum Salary: **$50,00.00-$65,000.00**
Opening Date: **August 20, 2008** Closing Date: **September 11, 2008**
Location: **PSS – OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION**
Benefits: Salary Commensurate with qualifications and experience, plus excellent benefits (including Life Insurance, Retirement Benefits, and Paid Leave/Holidays

Minimum Requirements:
Graduation from a US accredited college or university with a Master's degree in Education Administration or related areas, plus at least five (5) years of progressively responsible teaching or education administration experience.

***Detailed job description with qualification requirements can be obtained at PSS Human Resources Office at the 3rd Retirement Building, Capitol Hill, or download it online www.pss.cnmi.mp/humanresources**

INTERESTED APPLICANTS MAY OBTAIN A DETAILED JOB DESCRIPTION WITH QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION FORMS AT THE PSS HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE AT THE 3rd RETIREMENT BUILDING, CAPITOL HILL. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MUST BE ATTACHED TO COMPLETE APPLICATION FORMS: (1) COPY OF DIPLOMA/DEGREE, (2) TRANSCRIPTS, (3) POLICE CLEARANCE (FROM PLACE OF RESIDENCE FOR PAST SIX MONTHS), (4) VERIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT LETTER, (5) RESUME, AND (6) TEACHING CERTIFICATE (IF APPLICABLE).COMPLETED APPLICATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MAY BE SUBMITTED TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE OR MAILED TO: CNMI PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, ATTN: HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE, RETIREMENT BUILDING; THIRD FLOOR, P.O. BOX 501370 CK, SAIPAN, MP 96950, and TEL. #. (670) 237-3051, FAX # (670) 664-3707. ALSO VISIT http://www.pss.cnmi.mp/humanresources ON THE WORLDWIDE WEB.

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Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

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• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Sisters set up all-Williams quarterfinal at Open

NEW YORK (AP)—By now, Venus and Serena Williams know all too well how it feels to set aside sisterhood for a couple of hours and try to beat each other on a tennis court.

They know what it feels like to meet at a Grand Slam tournament, what it feels like to win such a match, what it feels like to lose.

And they much prefer it when there's a major championship at stake. The all-Williams showdown, set up by their easy victories Monday at the U.S. Open, comes earlier this time.

This time, Williams vs. Williams is only a quarterfinal.

"It's so soon," Serena said. "You know, it's just disappointing to be so soon."

Both advanced through the fourth round without a challenge. The No. 7-seeded Venus dismissed No. 9 Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland 6-1, 6-3, before No. 4 Serena dispatched wild-card entrant Severine Bremond of France 6-2, 6-2 at night.

"Even the semis would have been better than the quarterfinals, but at least one of us will make it to the semis," Serena told the crowd during an on-court interview. "I've got probably the toughest match of the tournament coming up next, so I've got to be ready."

Some sisters make plans to go shopping together, say, or to catch a movie. These siblings keep running into each other at their sport's highest levels.

Venus beat Serena for the title at Wimbledon in July—their seventh major title match—and Wednesday will mark the first time they've squared off at consecutive Grand Slam tournaments since 2003.

Both have dealt with injuries and inactivity that stalled their dominance, but clearly they are back at the height of their powers.

AP

Venus Williams of the U.S. returns a shot to Alona Bondarenko of the Ukraine during their match at the U.S. Open tennis tournament in New York, Saturday, Aug. 30, 2008.

"The best part is that we're still here," Venus said, "going stronger than ever, in my opinion."

They've played 16 times as professionals, with each winning eight. That includes 10 meetings at major tournaments, with each winning five.

"I would love to have a winning record," Venus said. "I have a chance."

Because of the luck of the pre-tournament draw, they were placed in the same portion of the bracket in New York—much to the disappointment of them, U.S. Open organizers and TV types. Even other players.

"For sure, it would have been better for the crowd if it was a final," Bremond said. "It would have been a very good final."

That certainly rings true: Serena has lost a total of 14 games through four matches at Flushing Meadows; Venus has dropped 15.

Of the eight women left in the tournament, only two have won a Grand Slam title—Serena leads all active players with eight, and Venus is right behind with seven.

They won every U.S. Open women's singles championship from 1999 to 2002, meeting in the finals the last two years of that span—it was their ascension that prompted the U.S. Open to move the women's final from Saturday afternoon to Saturday night. Since 2002, though, Serena hasn't made it past the quarterfinals here, and Venus has only reached one semifinal.

"I just feel like, you know, we're both playing better and feeling better," Serena said. "We just had a turn in our careers. We're just playing the way we should play."

Also advancing Monday were No. 6 Dinara Safina, who defeated Anna-Lena Groenefeld 7-5, 6-0, and No. 16 Flavia Pennetta, who beat No. 32 Amelie Mauresmo 6-3, 6-0.

In men's action, No. 1 Rafael Nadal held off 55th-ranked Sam Querrey, a 20-year-old Californian who never before had been to the fourth round at a major tournament. Querrey hung in during extended baseline rallies, and even briefly led in the third set, before losing 6-2, 5-7, 7-6 (2), 6-3.

Nadal owns four titles from the French Open and one from Wimbledon, but he's never been as far as the U.S. Open semifinals. He'll try to take care of that gap on his resume when he meets another unseeded American, Mardy Fish, in the quarterfinals.

Also advancing: No. 17 Juan Martin del Potro of Argentina, who ended the run of Kei Nishikori, the first Japanese man to reach the U.S. Open's fourth round in the 40-year Open era. Del Potro won the contest between teenagers 6-3, 6-4, 6-3 for his 23rd consecutive victory.

Del Potro will face No. 6 Andy Murray, who beat 10th-seeded Stanislas Wawrinka 6-1, 6-3, 6-3.

Fish serve-and-volleyed his way past No. 32 Gael Monfils in straight sets. As for facing Nadal?

"I feel like a guy with my style of play is someone that he doesn't want to see," said Fish, who won the point of 45 of 69 trips to the net. "You've got to be able to finish points quickly. He's going to last longer than anybody. He wants to keep the points as long as possible and run the guys down, kind of body-blow after body-blow."

Nadal, who's won 42 of his past 43 matches, had to work hard to wear down the 6-foot-6 Querrey. When Nadal served for a two-set lead, Querrey broke him at love. When Nadal was trying to put the kid away, serving with a 4-2 edge in the fourth set, Querrey compiled seven break points.

"The match was crazy like that, no?" Nadal said.

He saved each of those seven break points, though, and that pretty much was that.

"He had to earn it," Querrey noted proudly. "I didn't just give it to him."

Venus faced what theoretically should have been an opponent to be taken seriously: Not only is Radwanska ranked in the top 10, but she won her only previous match against the elder Williams sister and she upset then-defending champion Maria Sharapova at last year's U.S. Open.

Radwanska needed 27 minutes just to claim a game this time, and never came up with a reply for Venus' constant forays forward. Venus won the point 25 of 34 times at the net, and she put together a remarkable 33-11 advantage in winners.

"She was playing very aggressively, going to the net all the time. There was nothing I could do," Radwanska said. "She was too good."

Bremond offered essentially the same analysis after trying to slow Serena, who finished with a 24-10 edge in winners.

Asked to define her on-court sibling rivalry, Serena called it "classic" and "unique."

No argument there.

What about "difficult," given the prospect of trying to have success at a sister's expense?

"No. Not anymore," Serena replied. "Just another match. Another possibility for me."

Brady says he's ready to play in Patriots' opener

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)—Tom Brady ran through agility drills and said he's ready to play in the New England Patriots' opener. Bill Belichick isn't ready to say that will happen. Neither is much of a surprise.

It would be a big surprise if the record-setting quarterback, who had a right foot injury and missed all four exhibition games, doesn't start Sunday against the Kansas City Chiefs.

"If it's up to me, there's no question" Brady said Monday. "I've been getting progressively better over the past couple of weeks. I'm excited. I'm excited to start the year."

The secretive Belichick deflected a question about whether last season's NFL MVP would start Sunday.

"We will give you the injury report on Friday," he told reporters Monday. "We will give you the practice report after we practice."

Brady didn't want to anger a coach who tells his players not to reveal too much injury information. So he wouldn't estimate how close to 100 percent he was health-wise.

"I don't know," Brady said with a smile. "Coach hates percentages, so I usually don't give them. I have been yelled at more times with comments I make so I am laying off that one. Write that, so he reads that, too."

No matter the percentage, all signs point to Brady extending his playing streak to 128 games, third most in history among NFL quarterbacks. Only Brett Favre (275) and Peyton Manning (173) have longer streaks, and both are still going on.

And now the exhibition games are over.

"I felt like I could play all of them and I practiced the entire preseason, pretty much," Brady said. "The decision was made that, OK, Tom, you're not going to play, and I was fine with it."

A week ago, Brady said he would be ready for the Chiefs. Since then, he said, his foot has improved "quite a bit."

He also did everything the other quarterbacks, running backs and receivers did during the first 15 minutes of practice Monday that media members were allowed to observe. They stretched then jogged to the end zone for the agility drills.

The Patriots, with no proven backup, can't afford to be without Brady, who set an NFL record with 50 touchdown passes last season.

Matt Cassel, starting his fourth season as the No. 2 quarterback, couldn't lead the Patriots to a touchdown in 17 exhibition series. Kevin O'Connell, the Patriots third-round draft pick, is highly regarded but is just a rookie.

Tackle Matt Light missed the first three exhibition games and guard Stephen Neal missed all four. So Belichick played it safe by not risking Brady's health with two starters missing from the offensive line.

After eight seasons in the NFL, Brady expects to make a smooth transition to playing in a game even without the exhibition contests, all of them losses.

"Throwing so many footballs over the course of my life, it's not like I need to learn how to throw a football or take a drop or make a read," Brady said. "All the plays that are in the playbook are ones that were put in when I was here, so I was a part of all those conversations.

"It's just a matter of going out and doing it at a faster speed," he said. "I've played in a lot of those games to know what that speed is and, hopefully, I'm prepared for it."

Besides, Randy Moss sat out all four exhibition games last year and still caught an NFL record 23 touchdown passes. And that was his first year with the Patriots.

"The whole team is ready for Tom to come back," Moss said Sunday. "He is the leader of this team. He does some great things out there on the field with the ball."

On Monday, Light sounded optimistic about Brady's return.

"The way he directs things out there is what puts us in the right position to make these plays," Light said. "So it's good to have him back."

That should happen on Sunday now that his injured foot has improved.

"I think we have moved past that," Brady said. "I was out there practicing yesterday and I am going out there to practice today. Hopefully, I will be practicing enough the rest of the week to give everybody enough confidence to know that I will be OK if I go out there.

Singh wins Deutsche Bank, his 2nd straight victory

NORTON, Mass. (AP)—Another victory for Vijay Singh is turning the FedEx Cup into another snoozer. Singh made three long birdie putts and closed with an 8-under 63 to win the Deutsche Bank Championship on Monday for his second straight victory in the PGA Tour's playoff system.

That gave him such a big lead that he could win the $10 million prize without even showing up at the Tour Championship.

Attribute this to the power of positive thinking.

Singh, who has long struggled with the putter, convinced himself last week that he was the best putter in golf when he won The Barclays in a three-man playoff.

He made a few more believers on Labor Day at the TPC Boston.

Singh rolled in a 35-foot birdie putt on the 13th hole to stretch his lead to three shots, then raised the belly putter like a trophy when he holed a 60-foot birdie putt on the next hole. He capped off his amazing run with a 35-foot birdie on the 17th hole.

Any doubters?

"It's nice to see them going in," Singh said. "When they start going in, they believe it."

Weir, who had a one-shot lead until a double bogey on the ninth hole, simply couldn't keep up. He closed with a 71 to finish five shots behind, dropping his record to 1-9 on the PGA Tour when he has at least a share of the 54-hole lead.

Singh finished at 22-under 262 to break the tournament record by two shots in the six years of this event. It was his third victory in the past five weeks, after going through his longest drought in six years, and it should be enough to move him up to No. 3 in the world ranking.

"He played amazing. It was awesome," said Sergio Garcia, who was paired with Singh and closed with a 72. "I don't think you guys are going to realize how good that was, because you're aren't playing and you don't know how tough the course was playing. When Vijay plays like that, it's hard to beat him.

"It's like when Tiger plays well," he said. "You want to beat him, but it's good to watch. You're watching history."

The victory meant that after more than two months with Tiger Woods sidelined by season-ending knee surgery, someone finally toppled him on the PGA Tour money list. Singh, who collected his 34th career victory, moved to No. 1 on the list with $1.26 million in earnings.

AP

Vijay Singh, from Fiji, raises the trophy after winning the Deutsche Bank Championship golf tournament Monday, Sept. 1, 2008, in Norton, Mass.

But there is one comparison with Woods that the PGA Tour could do without.

Just as Woods destroyed the competition in the first year of the FedEx Cup finale, Singh is headed in the same direction and could turn the Tour Championship into merely an exhibition.

Singh has 120,500 points, giving him a 12,225-point lead over Garcia, who tied for fifth. That means Singh is assured of having the lead going into the Tour Championship, and another top finish might be enough to wrap up the title if none of the guys immediately behind him win in St. Louis next week.

"I'm going to go out and play really hard," Singh said. "If I have another win, it will be icing on the cake. But I don't take anything for granted."

Ernie Els flew too many greens and made too many bogeys to make a charge, closing with a 70 to tie for third with Camilo Villegas, who shot a 73.

This was the final tournament before U.S. captain Paul Azinger makes four picks to fill out his Ryder Cup team, and his job didn't get any easier.

The top American was Tim Herron, who shot 65 and tied for fifth with Garcia at 13-under 271. It was the first top 10 for Herron all year. Chad Campbell made a late push with a 69-66 weekend in the toughest conditions of the tournament to tie for seventh with Justin Leonard (67) and Jim Furyk (72), who already have qualified.

Azinger will announce his picks Tuesday morning in New York.

Too bad he can't claim Singh, a good friend, as an American.

The big Fijian was simply unbeatable in winning the Deutsche Bank Championship for the second time in four years, and winning consecutive times for the first time since 2004. Along with making the three birdie putts a combined 130 feet long, Singh chipped in for eagle from 30 feet on the second hole.

Weir remained in control with two birdies, but he came undone when his approach to the par-4 ninth sailed left into thick rough. He chipped over the firm green, chipped 15 feet past the hole to the fringe and made double bogey.

The Canadian also made bogey from the rough on No. 12, and by then, it was a runaway.

Herron's biggest week also allowed him to keep playing. The top 70 in the FedEx Cup standings advance to the third round of the playoffs in St. Louis this week at the BMW Championship. Herron started the week at No. 99, but his tie for fifth moved him all the way up to No. 48.

Former U.S. Open champion Angel Cabrera shot a 71 and claimed the 70th spot by 121 points over Pat Perez.

Among those who failed to advance was Sean O'Hair, who was 16th when the playoffs began but missed two cuts and fell to No. 75. Also done for the PGA Tour season is Paul Casey, a captain's pick for Europe's Ryder Cup team.

Bill Haas was poised to keep playing until he closed with a 79 and missed by 209 points.

There's a much larger gap at the top, where Singh is in clear control.

Indians' Lee notches 20th win, shuts out White Sox 5-0

CLEVELAND (AP)—Cliff Lee became Cleveland's first 20-game winner in 34 years, pitching a five-hitter for his second career shutout to lead the Indians to a 5-0 win over the Chicago White Sox in the American League on Monday.

Lee (20-2) is the first Indians pitcher to reach 20 wins since Hall of Famer Gaylord Perry went 21-13 in 1974. The left-hander's milestone win _ his ninth straight victory—came exactly one year to the day that he was recalled from the minor leagues.

With a chance to join Perry as well as Hall of Famers Bob Feller and Bob Lemon in Cleveland's record book as 20-game winners, Lee shut down the hard-hitting, Central-leading White Sox with ease. He gave up two singles to open the first and then retired 21 in row.

Yankees 13, Tigers 9

At Detroit, Alex Rodriguez's four RBIs helped New York build the huge cushion it needed in a win over Detroit.

Rodriguez sparked the scoring barrage with a two-run single in the first inning and added a RBI in each of the next two frames for the Yankees to take an 11-2 lead, but they were ahead by just two runs following five innings after giving up homers to Gary Sheffield, Miguel Cabrera and Brandon Inge.

Derek Jeter drove in one of two runs in the sixth, padding the lead to 13-9 in the makeup game after a matchup in May was rained out.

Justin Verlander (10-15) lasted a career-low 1 2-3 innings and gave up eight runs—five earned—and seven hits with two walks.

Red Sox 7, Orioles 4

At Boston, Dustin Pedroia's two-run single capped a four-run sixth inning, Paul Byrd pitched seven efficient innings and Boston beat the struggling Baltimore.

The Red Sox pulled to five games behind the idle Rays. Boston increased its lead to three games in the wild card race.

Baltimore, swept in a three-game series at Tampa Bay over the weekend when its pitchers allowed 34 runs, lost for the ninth time in 10 games.

Garrett Olson (8-7) gave up six runs and six hits in 5 2-3 innings.

Mariners 12, Rangers 6

At Arlington, Texas, Adrian Beltre hit for the cycle and had five hits to help Seattle win its fourth straight game, beating Texas.

Beltre, who had the third five-hit game of his career, became the fourth Mariners player to hit for the cycle with an RBI triple off Josh Rupe in the eighth.

Diamondbacks 8, Cardinals 6

At Phoenix, Stephen Drew became the first player to hit for the cycle in Chase Field, and newly acquired David Eckstein singled home the winning run to help the Arizona Diamondbacks rally past the St. Louis Cardinals.

Adam Dunn, Chris Young and Mark Reynolds also homered for the slumping Diamondbacks, who overcame a poor start by Randy Johnson.

Batting leadoff, Drew singled in the first, tripled in the third and homered in the fifth against St. Louis starter Joel Pineiro. He hit a ground-rule double in the seventh against reliever Kyle McClellan (2-7) as the Chase Field crowd rose for a standing ovation.

Astros 3, Cubs 0

At Chicago, Roy Oswalt allowed four hits and came within two outs of a shutout as Houston ran its National League winning streak to six games.

Chicago has lost three straight, all at home—its first three-game skid at Wrigley Field since August last year.

Oswalt (13-9) took a two-hit shutout into the ninth. But pinch-hitter Daryle Ward and Alfonso Soriano hit back-to-back singles with one out before Jose Valverde was summoned from the bullpen.

Mets 4, Brewers 2

At Milwaukee, Carlos Delgado's two-run home run off Eric Gagne in the eighth inning propelled New York to a victory over Milwaukee.

Milwaukee starter Ben Sheets pitched five scoreless innings but left the game due to tightness in his left groin.

Gagne (4-3) gave up three runs and four hits in the eighth. He has a 6.81 ERA this year after signing a $10 million (€6.8 million), one-year contract with the Brewers.

Nationals 7, Phillies 4

At Washington, Ryan Zimmerman hit a two-run home run in Washington's seventh straight win.

Starter Tim Redding didn't allow a hit in the first five innings for the Nationals, who are on their best streak since a 10-win stretch in June 2005.

The only two hits given up by Redding (10-8) came in the sixth, before he was lifted for a reliever. Redding allowed three runs in 5 2-3 innings. He hit two batters.

Kyle Kendrick (11-8) took the loss.

Rockies 4, Giants 0

At Denver, Jorge De La Rosa pitched seven shutout innings and had a RBI single, Willy Taveras stole three bases and scored twice and Colorado shut out San Francisco.

De La Rosa (8-7) was sharp for the fifth straight start, allowing four hits, striking out six and walking one. He didn't allow a runner past first base and twice erased leadoff singles by inducing double plays.

Marlins 4, Braves 3

At Miami, Jorge Cantu homered and John Baker hit a bases-loaded sacrifice fly to drive in the winning run in the ninth, helping Florida beat Atlanta.

Baker's fly ball to shallow left drove in Dan Uggla, who beat left fielder Brandon Jones' throw to the plate.

Dodgers 5, Padres 2

At Los Angeles, Greg Maddux tied Roger Clemens for eighth place on the career list with his 354th victory, leading Los Angeles past San Diego.

Maddux (7-11) allowed two runs and six hits, struck out four and walked none.

Chris Young (4-5) gave up four runs and six hits in five innings after being activated from the disabled list.

NMASA general membership meeting set for tomorrow

The Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association will hold its regular monthly meeting tomorrow night, Aug 4, 7pm at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium conference room.

As always, NMASA member associations will vote for the best athletes for the previous month (July) in four categories (male, female, male student, and female student) during the August general membership meeting.

NMASA reminds associations that will be nominating their athletes to submit written nominations in multiple copies to be distributed to members during the meeting.

Among the topics also set to be discussed during the meeting will be the CNMI's participation in the 2009 Pacific Mini Games in the Cook Islands.

Cook Islands last year announced that 15 sports featured in the 2009 edition of the quadrennial Games. The 15 sports are up from the 12 offered during the VII Pacific Mini Games held in Koror, Palau in 2005.

Athletics, table tennis, triathlon, va'a or outrigger canoeing, and weightlifting, bodybuilding, boxing, lawn bowls, rugby league, and touch rugby are the sports lined up for the 2009 Cook Islands Pacific Mini Games. ***(NMASA)***

Pacman: 3 more fights, and he'll join politics

MANILA, Philippines—Three more fights and Manny Pacquiao is ready for the main event—politics. And he will be trained by no less than the political party of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Knocked out by reelectionist Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio in his political debut in May last year, the Pacman Monday said he would quit boxing next year in time for the 2010 elections.

He will either run as a congressman again or try for a local government seat in the Cotabato area or in Saranggani, the World Boxing Council lightweight king said.

Pacquiao's immediate concern is to defeat another boxing legend, American Oscar De La Hoya, when they fight in Las Vegas on Dec. 6 at 147 lbs.

"Actually, my parents want this (De la Hoya fight) to be my last fight. But I told them I can still fight around two more fights after De la Hoya. So maybe around July or August next year, that's when I will retire," he said in Filipino.

Dubbed the world's best pound-for-pound fighter, Pacquiao is not exactly a spring chicken anymore. He will turn 30 on Dec. 17. De La Hoya is 35.

Pacquiao said he saw no problem in moving up to the welterweight class for the De La Hoya fight.

"It really depends on my preparations. I need three months to prepare, to get in the condition that I want to be for the fight," he said.

Pacquiao professed admiration for De La Hoya.

"He was my idol when I was starting out. Now I can't believe I am fighting him. So maybe to fight him is already a big honor. More so if I beat him."

He declined to reveal what his strategy would be for the fight but said he had started to train and would fly to the US on Sept. 14 to continue with his training.

"A win [over De La Hoya] would bring honor to the country and my countrymen. My political career will be a help to them too," he said.

Pacquiao was at the office of Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno to take his oath as a full-fledged member of the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), the political party of President Arroyo. Puno is the Kampi president.

The oath-taking was witnessed by Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, Palawan Rep. Antonio Alvarez and other party officials.

Clad in barong tagalog and black pants, Pacquiao was mobbed by office workers.

"Every time I fight, what I give is honor. But you can't eat that. They (his provincemates) need help because their lives are so hard … I want to help them in any way," the boxer stressed.

He said that he would never allow himself to be eaten up by the political system.. ***(PDI)***

MIEKO

From Page 28

altitude of 1,500m. They immediately went into practice and acclimatized themselves with the weather and familiarize the course.

"I was careful with the bike because it was so muddy. Last year I fell into the lake. I watched how Renata rode the course."

She said there were times that she had to carry the bike and walked and she said Bucher did too.

They even joked that they need 200 percent focus instead of 100 percent.

During the eve of the race, Carey said it rained so hard that every place was flooded and there were even warnings of landslides.

Because the lake was too cold, organizers decided to start the race at around 11am and the course had been changed due to the weather condition.

But despite of this, Carey said the swim was better for her this time compared to the previous year.

"I came out around fifth or seventh but I hardly breathed and felt different than usual from that kind of altitude,' she recalled.

In the bike, the beginning was good for her with a new tire designed for muddy roads.

Then eight or 10 minutes into the bike race, her buddy Bucher passed her and she tried to catch up but she couldn't.

"Still I felt good than last year. I was thinking all the time not to hurry. I needed concentration and made sure I was safe," Carey said.

After about 30 minutes, she felt something was missing from her right foot.

"I thought I didn't tighten my shoe soles enough. My shoes were broken," she said.

So she thought about her upcoming Maui race and worried about how she can finish the race but then she remembered her friend Paul finishing the race before back on Saipan without sheet post.

She prayed not to get hurt. The bike course was too technical so she needed to walk many times and felt that her feet were starting to get sore. Some of the athletes were concerned about her condition.

As she took off her shoes and went for the run, several spectators photographed her ruined shoes.

Another surprise greeted Carey as the run course was altered.

"Usually we use rope but it was very dangerous because of the weather, though it was a good run. I tried to catch some people but already my body was tired and still very hard to breath. I was thinking it is great training for Maui."

"I went to the finish line and I saw all of my friends were waiting for me, Renata, Sam Taro, Paul, and other Japanese XTERRA friends. I run to Taro and cried a lot. Taro just kept saying to me, 'buy new shoes, buy new shoes.'"

After the fun and the unique experience she endured, she said a lot of triathletes wanted to join the 2009 XTERRA Saipan.

She also said that several bike shops and a clothing companies expressed interest in joining the Crown Jewel of the XTERRA Global Tour.

MACARANAS

From Page 28

R.J. also competed in the U.S. Kids qualifiers at Carlton Oaks and Brookside, Junior Golf of Southern Nevada Junior World Qualifier at Eagle Crest GC in Nevada, the O'Donnell Classic in Palm Springs, the Crosby Memorial at Recreation Park South Course, LA County Championships at Diamond Bar, Mountain Meadows, and Santa Anita, the Yorba Linda CC Invitational, and the U.S. Kids World Championship at Pinehurst North Carolina.

Before returning to school this month, the former 6-and-under Junior World Champion completed 33 rounds of golf and participated in two world junior championships.

Of the many courses he played in, the younger Macaranas calls the Recreation Park South Course and Heartwell GC his home courses.

Heartwell FC is one of the Top 10 popular par-3 courses in Southern California, The course has Tiger Woods' memorabilia on display, including the one when Woods made his first birdie on the No. 3 hole at the age of four.

An article written by Eric Tracy for the *Southland Golf* magazine, described Heartwell GC as a "lighted 18-hole course where a young Tiger Woods cut his baby teeth in the game."

The lighted course helped R.J. and many junior golfers train from 6pm to 10pm.

After summer, R.J. will be preparing next for the fall tournaments and he is aiming to lower his handicap to nine.

"One of R.J.'s goals this year is to bring his handicap down from 14 to nine. R.J., however, said 'there's no advantage in having a handicap anyway because all scores in tournaments are gross scores. I've never play with a handicap,'" Richard said.

Richard said R.J. is hoping to participate in the Bridgestone Fall Tournament of Champions in New Port Beach this fall.

CAPTAIN

From Page 28

Over 70 players participated in the season-ending tournament, which gave more emphasis to the fun part of the sport than competition.

"The entire day was an embodiment of the "fun" aspect that the co-ed league represents," said tournament coordinator Rio Sawhill. "Although there were some hard fouls during the day, almost everyone came away walking. The injuries that required someone to be carried off the field, both turned out okay."

"One of the most enjoyable aspects of the co-ed league was seeing first-time players of all ages learn and improve their soccer skills over the past few months. People were playing at a totally different level than they were when our summer season began in June," he added.

Sawhill thanked volunteers and referees for making the event possible, and for donating food and money for the all-day festivities

He made special mention of CNMI National Team member Peter Loken, who played in six matches on four different teams.

"If there had been trophies given out, we would have definitely honored him with one," Sawhill said.

BIG HIT

From Page 28

behind by two points in the early goings but came back in time to reverse the outcome for a 4-2 count with 10 seconds left before the final buzzer sounded.

This has caused a big celebration from the sidelines among his teammates, who cheered him and inspired him to stay focus in his bout at the Phoenix Center in Mangilao.

"It was a good learning experience for me because most of the competitors there were very experienced grapplers," Fitial said.

He said he never expected this.

"I just went there to compete, tried my best and did what I can and succeeded," said Fitial, who trained for the tournament for three months.

He said it was his best finish ever.

The other grapplers from Saipan who competed but did not reach the medal bouts were Trench Tech's Shane" Pikaboo" Alvarez, Jeff "Thunder" Cloud, Kyle Peterson, and Alvarick "Pretty Boy" Alvarez.

They all competed in the gi and no gi categories and put up a good showing in various weight classes.

Fitial thanked his them for their support during the tournament.

He also thanked Justis "Cuki" F. Alvarez, president/promoter of Trench Tech Inc., for the trip.

Alvarez said that Saipan is definitely proving that "we are a force to be reckoned with in the ever growing sport of MMA and Jiu jitsu.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	84	51	.622	–
Boston	80	57	.584	5
New York	73	64	.533	12
Toronto	70	66	.515	14
Baltimore	63	74	.460	22

Central Division

Chicago	77	60	.562	–
Minnesota	77	60	.562	–
Cleveland	66	70	.485	10
Detroit	66	71	.482	11
Kansas City	57	79	.419	19

West Division

Los Angeles	83	53	.610	–
Texas	67	72	.482	17
Oakland	63	74	.460	20
Seattle	54	83	.394	29

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

New York	77	61	.558	–
Philadelphia	75	63	.543	2
Florida	70	68	.507	7
Atlanta	59	79	.428	18
Washington	53	85	.384	24

Central Division

Chicago	85	53	.616	–
Milwaukee	80	57	.584	4
St. Louis	74	64	.536	11
Houston	72	66	.522	13
Cincinnati	61	76	.445	23
Pittsburgh	57	79	.419	27

West Division

Arizona	70	67	.511	–
Los Angeles	68	70	.493	2
Colorado	65	74	.468	6
San Francisco	59	78	.431	11
San Diego	53	84	.387	17

Yesterday's Games

Florida 4, Atlanta 3
N.Y. Mets 4, Milwaukee 2
Colorado 4, San Francisco 0
Washington 7, Philadelphia 4
Houston 3, Chicago Cubs 0
Arizona 8, St. Louis 6
L.A. Dodgers 5, San Diego
N.Y. Yankees 13, Detroit 9
Boston 7, Baltimore 4
Cleveland 5, Chicago White Sox 0
Seattle 12, Texas 6

DEUTSCHE BANK SCORES

NORTON, Massachusetts (AP)–Scores Monday from the Deutsche Bank Championship, a $7 million (4.7 million euro) U.S. PGA Tour playoff at 7,207-yard, par-71 TPC Boston:

FINAL ROUND

Vijay Singh	64-66-69-63	262
Mike Weir	61-68-67-71	267
Ernie Els	66-65-69-70	270
Camilo Villegas	68-66-63-73	270
Tim Herron	72-67-67-65	271
Sergio Garcia	67-64-68-72	271
Chad Campbell	67-70-69-66	272
Justin Leonard	69-70-66-67	272
Jim Furyk	66-65-69-72	272
Steve Marino	66-66-71-70	273
Ken Duke	66-67-70-70	273
Ben Crane	72-65-63-73	273
Steve Stricker	69-67-70-68	274
Ryuji Imada	69-65-68-72	274
Johnson Wagner	68-65-74-68	275
Hunter Mahan	70-64-72-69	275
Steve Flesch	68-65-73-69	275
Angel Cabrera	67-68-69-71	275
Heath Slocum	64-68-69-74	275
Tim Clark	66-62-73-74	275
K.J. Choi	69-70-70-67	276
Pat Perez	69-69-68-70	276
Brett Quigley	69-70-67-70	276
Carl Pettersson	67-68-68-73	276
Richard S. Johnson	67-66-69-74	276
Briny Baird	64-69-68-75	276
J.J. Henry	68-69-71-69	277
Brandt Snedeker	67-68-72-70	277
Boo Weekley	70-67-70-70	277
Anthony Kim	66-66-74-71	277
Ben Curtis	65-65-75-72	277
Michael Allen	71-68-66-72	277
John Merrick	64-68-76-70	278
John Senden	69-69-70-70	278
Charley Hoffman	67-69-71-71	278
Stuart Appleby	70-66-70-72	278
Jonathan Byrd	67-69-69-73	278
Stewart Cink	67-69-69-73	278
Jesper Parnevik	68-71-66-73	278
John Rollins	73-66-70-70	279
Tim Petrovic	71-65-72-71	279
Mark Wilson	69-69-67-74	279
Woody Austin	72-66-66-75	279
Bubba Watson	70-69-71-70	280
Bo Van Pelt	67-67-74-72	280
Nick O'Hern	69-66-73-72	280
Robert Allenby	70-67-71-72	280
Scott McCarron	69-70-69-72	280
Charlie Wi	66-67-71-76	280
Jason Day	70-66-74-71	281
Ryan Palmer	67-68-74-72	281
Andres Romero	68-69-72-72	281
Brian Gay	68-68-73-72	281
Trevor Immelman	71-67-71-72	281
Stephen Ames	71-67-71-72	281
Kevin Sutherland	70-67-71-73	281
Martin Laird	70-68-70-73	281
Bart Bryant	69-70-68-74	281
Brian Davis	70-66-70-75	281
Lucas Glover	68-71-67-75	281
Tom Pernice, Jr.	69-67-69-76	281
Kevin Streelman	66-65-73-77	281
Scott Verplank	69-68-71-74	282
John Mallinger	66-67-74-75	282
Chez Reavie	69-69-69-75	282
Jeff Overton	66-67-72-77	282
Fredrik Jacobson	67-68-74-74	283
D.J. Trahan	67-66-70-80	283
Rocco Mediate	69-70-71-74	284
Frank Lickliter II	73-65-70-76	284
Bill Haas	69-70-66-79	284
Geoff Ogilvy	67-70-73-76	286

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Local coaching course in volleyball in the works

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

The Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association wants to develop coaches in the CNMI though a localized version of the FIVB Level I Coaching Course held recently.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association is planning to hold a localized version of the FIVB Level I Coaching Course to help develop coaches in the CNMI.

NMIVA president Laurie Peterka said they will be discussing the possibilities of creating a national coaching certification in their board meeting this month.

"While we have not defined exactly how it will work or when it will take place, it might be something like five Saturdays (four-hour courses) with a practical exam and a final exam to earn a NMIVA coaching certificate. This certificate would enable those who successfully accomplish this goal to enter into our next international accreditation program such as the course we just completed," Peterka said in an email to the *Saipan Tribune*.

Peterka and nine other coaches/players completed the Level I Coaching Course from Federation Internationale de Volleyball last month.

FIBV instructor and 10-time Australian Men's National Team coach Tomas Santamaria conducted the weeklong clinic from Aug. 20 to 27 at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The course discussed practices, theories, and techniques in indoor volleyball. It taught participants the fundamentals of both playing and teaching indoor volleyball, conditioning, mental preparations, and team cooperation, and variety of drills for beginners to juniors to advanced players.

After the theories and practical exam, participants took a final exam with all passing it and receiving certification from FIVB.

Russ Quinn, who coached the CNMI in the men's and women's beach volleyball competitions in the South Pacific Games in Apia, Samoa last year, took the certification course and would want to share what he learned from Santamaria to the community.

"The clinic was great. We had a good turnout of experience players who are looking to give back what they learned from FIVB to the volleyball community here," Quinn said.

Besides Quinn and Peterka, other graduates of the FIVB course were Mili Saiki, Mark McDonald, Joe Taijeron, Tamiko Winkfield, Christopher Shepherd, Gabriel White, and Kim Peterson.

Peterka said having a national coaching certification program is one of the best ways to develop volleyball in the Commonwealth. Having such a program might also help the CNMI in seeking funding from FIVB.

"FIVB is the second largest sports federation in the world with over $250 million in funds and with 219 member countries. It is the only sport with two disciplines in the Olympics with both the indoor and beach volleyball competitions. Through NMIVA and our association with FIVB, the CNMI has the opportunity to expand volleyball to all the local youth. We just need commitment and dedication from teachers and volunteer youth coordinators," Peterka said.

She added that having a national coaching certification program will help bring a new enthusiasm to volleyball in the CNMI. The program is part of NMIVA's plan to continue what former NMIVA president Jon Cramer did in his term. Peterka said Cramer wanted to focus on the development of the youth and junior players, both in indoor and beach volleyball.

Banquet to kick-off Miller Lite beach v-ball

The Pacific Island Club said it is ready to hold the 2008 Miller Lite 4-Person Beach Volleyball Fall League Beach Volleyball League.

PIC sports manager Lindsey Sosovec announced this week that a banquet would be held on Sept. 18 starting at 7pm at the PIC volleyball court where teams would be selected for the tournament.

Games will be held twice a week starting on Sept. 23. The tournament will run until November.

Entry fee will be $20 for members of NMI Volleyball Association while non-NMIVA will pay $25.

The cost would include the league, buffet and drinks at the banquet plus a T-shirt.

For more information about the 2008 Miller Lite 4-Person Beach Volleyball Fall League, call PIC sports manager Lindsey Sosovec at 235-6231 (extension 5147).

Last year, Raw Juice scored an anticlimactic 15-6 win over Bakkery to end the top seed's 13-game winning run and in the process win the championship of the 2007 Miller Lite 4-Person Beach Volleyball Fall League at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts. ***(Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)***

Fil-Taga 15th year golf tournament set Nov. 16

This early. organizers have finalized the date and venue for Fil-Taga Golfers Association's 15th Anniversary Golf Tournament with a maximum target number of 144 players or a minimum of 60.

The annual event is slated Nov. 16 at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Resort in Koblerville. The venue and the date of the event was decided during a meeting recently.

Entry fees and prizes were also finalized as well as the selection of chairmen for various committees—Ted Mallaran (tournament and solicitation director), Nestor Siruelo (prizes and surprises), Leo Ganacias (advertisement and program), and Rey Ferraz (entry forms and tournament rules and regulations).

The entry fee for each Fil-Taga member is $80, while guest players will pay $100 to join the event.

The double peoria-format tourney will have a shotgun start of two flights for each hole starting at 10:30am. Show time is scheduled at 9am.

Organizers remind that each member should secure a minimum of two guest players.

The first two players to make a hole-in-one will get $10,000 each.

Mike Licup of Traders Insurance committed a tentative premium of $250 per $10,000.

Also discussed was the tournament's regular attraction—the nearest to the pin contest for all par 3s—with a one-time fee of $20 and raffle ticket worth $1 each.

Fil-Taga's officers are led by president Jun Dela Cruz Jr., vice-president Jhun Calma, secretary Manny Po, and treasurer Guban.

Its board of directors is made up of Fr. Manny Corcuera, Miguel Cruz, Jr., Ted Malaran, Gil Faller, Rey Ferraz, Greg De Torres, Rene Batallones, Nestor Siruelo, and George Sablan

MARK RABAGO

Mike Cruz and the rest of Fil-Taga Golfers Association will hold their 15th Anniversary Golf Tournament on Nov. 16 at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Resort in Koblerville.

Established in 1993, Fil-Taga's tournaments operate under a computer-controlled handicap system that creates parity among players in the A and B Flights.

A Fil-Taga Ace of the Month champion is crowned monthly. Regular tournaments are scheduled once a month, normally every third Sunday. Green fees are in the $35 to $40 price range for most tournaments. ***(Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)***

Oceania badminton officer to visit Saipan

The development officer for Oceania Badminton Confederation will be on Saipan from Oct. 1 to 12. His visit could pave the way for the eventual inclusion of the CNMI in the zone's roster.

Northern Marianas Badminton Federation president Marconi Calindas said they are excited to welcome Tony Mordaunt, Badminton Oceania Regional Coaching/Development manager.

He said this is a chance for Mordaunt to learn more about the federation and how it is promoting the game here in the CNMI.

Calindas said that Mordaunt's visit would also be an opportunity for the players to hone their skills.

One of the important aspects of the visit would be a coaching clinic.

Mordaunt will be sharing his knowledge and skills with at least eight potential coaches from the NMBF.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Northern Marianas Badminton Federation will welcome Badminton Oceania Regional Coaching/Development manager Tony Mordaunt next month. Photo above shows NMBF member Raj Jayalal in action in a file photo.

The group is currently lining up schools for Mordaunt to visit.

"We are encouraging members to show up during game practices where Mordaunt will play with us and do some training for the members," Calindas said the group is also excited to teach and impart to school kids the sport with a badminton veteran.

"I hope PSS will allow us to share Mordaunt's time with the school kids."

Founded in Feb. 24, 2005, the NMBF is trying to promote the Olympic sport of badminton, especially to the local youth. It has grown rapidly to a total of 150 members since its creation.

The NMBF is also an organization that aims to develop badminton at the grassroots level and hopefully in the next five years, send one or two local players as representatives to off-island competitions. ***(Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)***

Local coaching course in volleyball in the works

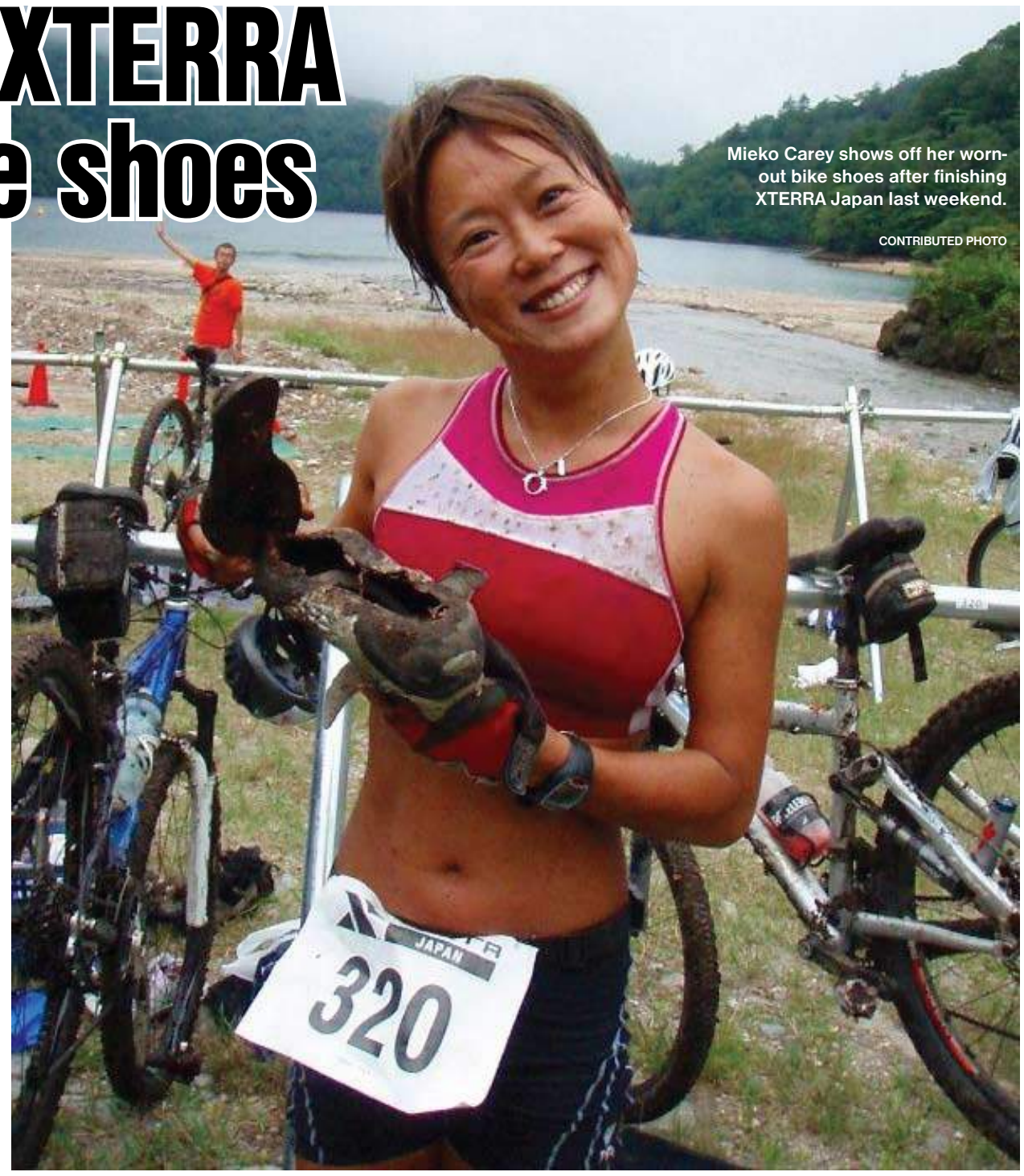
The Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association is planning to hold a localized version of the FIVB Level I Coaching Course to help develop coaches in the CNMI. 27

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Sisters set up all-Williams quarterfinal at Open

By now, Venus and Serena Williams know all too well how it feels to set aside sisterhood for a couple of hours and try to beat each other on a tennis court. 24

Mieko finishes XTERRA Japan sans bike shoes



Mieko Carey shows off her worn-out bike shoes after finishing XTERRA Japan last weekend.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Bothered by the cool weather, Saipan's veteran triathlete Mieko Carey was glad to report that she managed to finish without her shoes in the bike race, turning the competition to a dramatic conclusion for her XTERRA Japan odyssey last weekend.

"It was great and so much fun to see XTERRA friends there except [for the] weather and my shoes," Carey wrote in an email.

She was uninjured but said she cried as delighted friends consoled her when she reached the finish line.

Still, Carey assessed that her recent experience in her native country will be a good preparation for her upcoming race in Maui, the venue for the annual XTERRA World Championships next month.

She said she is ready for Maui.

Carey thus wrote to tell her tale of her experience and that of her friend and four-time XTERRA Saipan champion Renata Bucher before, during, and after the race—funny but inspiring.

The Saipan-based triathlete said that after a five-hour delay of Bucher's flight from Saipan, they were finally reunited and stayed in her father's house in Izakaya.

She even recalled how her father loves to host a friend of her daughter's and even asked Bucher to come back next year.

The next morning, the two arrived at the venue in Marunuma, which has an

See MIEKO on Page 26

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

R.J. Macaranas tees off in one of the summer tournaments in the U.S. The 10-year-old golfer is now a member of the "Elite 10" club of the Long Beach Junior Golf after lowering his handicap from 12 to 10.

Macaranas joins 'Elite 10' club in Long Beach

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

R.J. Macaranas added another milestone in his young golf career last month, earning a spot in Long Beach Junior Golf's "Elite 10" club.

Macaranas, whose parents Richard and Becky are from Saipan, lowered his handicap from 12 to 10 after topping two events in LBJG.

Richard said his 10-year-old son received the club's personalized "Elite 10" jacket, which is a pullover waterproof windbreaker that is given only to golfers with a 10 handicap.

"The 'Elite 10' club members are mostly teenagers, and to be a member at an early age feels good. The jacket will be a reminder that his hard work gave him good results and rewards," Richard said in an email to the *Saipan Tribune*.

Besides the tournaments in LBJG, the younger Macaranas also played at Heartwell GC for the LBGF, Lawrence Welk Resort for the Callaway Golf Junior World Championships, Alhambra Junior World Qualifier, Lakewood CC for the Len Kennett Championships, and El Cariso GC for the LA County Championships last summer.

See MACARANAS on Page 26

Captain Morgan's tops season-ending football league

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Captain Morgan's capped its campaign in the 2008 NMIFA Fall Co-Ed Soccer League with a finals win against Greg & Mel's Friends Sunday at the CPA Airport Field.

Sunday's matches were part of the season-ending tournament in the fall league. It featured four other teams playing from 8am until late afternoon.

The top two teams after the morning match met in the championship game in the afternoon with Captain Morgan's outclassing Greg and Mel's Friends, 2-1.

CNMI National coach Nick Swaim and Nikki Gabaldon had one goal apiece for Captain Morgan's, while Joe Miller scored the lone goal for GMF.

Joining Swaim and Gabaldon on the champion team were David Loan, Karen Klaver, Tiger Lee, Natalie Hill, Laura Williams, Caleb Arriola, Bruce Berline, Chris Nelson, Luca Knecht, Alen Mijares, Melodu Matson, Jaimi Saiki, Leana Loanne, and Bisho. Also on the team but did not play Sunday were Zach Posner, Lindsay Sosovic, Felicia McFarln, and Alla Tsareva.

In the battle for third place, Devil's Advocates defeated Gil Fever, while Sureshanks claimed the fifth spot after downing the Deaniacs.

See CAPTAIN on Page 26

Big Hit grapples for gold in Guam

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Heavyweight grappler Kelvin Fitial lived up to his moniker.

"The Big Hit" thus hit it big by bringing the lone medal for the CNMI at the recently concluded Marianas Open All Island Grappling Jiu Jitsu Tournament in Guam last Saturday, Aug. 30.

Fitial, who weighs 205 kg. and represented 670, won all three of his bouts against three grapplers from different clubs in Guam to bag the gold.

He scored 2-0 against his first two opponents on the way to the finals.

In his final bout, Fitial was

See BIG HIT on Page 26

Kelvin "Big Hit" Fitial, seen here in a file photo against Charlz "The Predator" Aiken in Predator or Prey, took home gold medal in the recent Marianas Open All Island Grappling Jiu Jitsu Tournament in Guam.

MARK RABAGO